

DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl No. Q27M23

Ac. No. 341721

Date of release/re

This book should be returned on or before the date last st below. An overdue charge of 5 Paise will be collected for day the book is kept overtime.

BEHOLD THE MAN

or

Keshub and the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj

A Confession

By

Prof. Dwijadas Datta, M.A., A.R.A.C. (Cirencester).

To be had of the Author, or of Babu Ganesh Prosad,
84, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta,
for Rs. 1-8 per copy.

1930

OUR HISTORY AS GOSPEL

"Rest assured, my friends, when we are dead and gone, all the events that are transpiring around us in these days shall be written and embodied in history, and shall be unto future generations a New Gospel of God's saving grace."

—Keshub Chunder Sen

TO THE READER

Condensed from "*The World and The New Dispensation*"

History as the Voice of God

If history is something more than a mere record of facts and figures, if it is the transcript of the inner life of men and movements, of the striving of the soul of a people, we can ignore it only at our peril, for the present and the future are indissolubly linked up with the past. History is indeed the "voice of God," and a re-reading of history means the re-discovery of the ways of God. If we look at it in this light we can never have too much of it, especially as the history of our Church is the unfolding of the New Dispensation to us

In this sense the true history of the Brahmo Somaj is to be found, first of all, in the *lives* of the apostles and the missionaries, and then in their *experiences* as recorded in institutions and books of which the chief are the hymns. Of books especially dealing with the outer history of the movement in its earlier portion, we have in Bengali, Rev T. N Sanyal's "*Brahmo Somajer Itibritta.*" The Rev P C. Mozoomdar's "*Faith and Progress of the Brahmo Somaj*" brings it down to 1882, about a year before Keshub Chunder Sen passed away That memorable event was followed by three well known publications from our Apostolic Brotherhood These were (1) Rev T. N Sanyal's "*Keshub Charit*" in Bengali, (2) Rev P C Mozoomdar's "*Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen*," and (3) Upadhyaya Gour Govinda Roy's eleven volumes of "*Acharya Keshub Chandra*," in Bengali. All misrepresentations of facts during the life-time of these workers were contradicted then and there in the organs

of our Church. But when Pundit Shiva Nath Shastri, after the death of most of these workers, brought out a "*History of the Brahmo Somaj*," some of the old misrepresentations were repeated, and it was found necessary to deal with these for the enlightenment of the readers of the new generation.

Navavidhan and the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj

It was a mere accident which brought Professor Dwijadas Datta, a very prominent member of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, into the field He happened to attend a Conference of the Navavidhan at Calcutta Before long he found out that his previous impressions did not correspond with his new experience of the Navavidhan gained by more intimate and personal contact with its surviving leaders And he began to acquaint himself with what Pundit Shastri and Miss S D Collet had written The result was a rude shock and a disillusionment With characteristic straightforwardness Professor Datta began to say in public what he thought of Keshub and the Navavidhan. He put together, at the request of the Editor of "*The World and The New Dispensation*," what he had been saying, in a series of articles, entitled "*Behold the Man*" This was in November 1916

The Title "*BEHOLD THE MAN*"

The vision expressed in the words "BEHOLD THE MAN," with the illustrative *text* from the *Srimadbhagavatam*, "The wrong that men do to the noble ones, ends in the total ruin of the wrong-doers themselves," ("*Hanti shreyangshi sarvani pumsam mahatatikramah*") —is a new revelation to the author to which he introduces his readers The text is taken from Section Ten, Chapter Four of the *Srimadbhagavatam*. It depicts King Kamsa of Mathura, like Herod in Jewish history, seeking to kill God's chosen one, consulting his evil counsellors

who, drunk with the greed of power, decide in Council assembled, to rid the earth of all saints and seers. "The wages of sin is death." The author, in the last couplet, says:—

"*Ayum shriyam yasho dharmam lokanashisha eba cha,*
Hanti shreyangshi sarvani pumso mahatatikramah."

"Those who (out of malice) seek to override or cast out or do away with the Great Ones,—the seers, the saints and the good people of God,—they meet their doom in the loss not only of health and prosperity, of fame and virtue, of men and their good wishes but of life itself" In the light thus revealed let these readers study the New Man of the New Dispensation. Among the readers may we not hope that our brethren of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, old and young, to whom they are specially addressed, will humbly and prayerfully meditate on them? The present *Bhadrotsav* (August 1929) is the 60th anniversary of the new worship (*upasana*) to which Pundit Shastri and other leaders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj were first introduced by Keshub All the blessed experiences they gathered in the Temple they worshipped together, in the years that followed, may be brought to mind, and He Who searcheth the hearts of men will reveal Himself anew as He has done to Brother Dwijadas, and more *confessions* may follow the one which is now before the readers.

The Matter

The articles were originally meant to be a study of the personality of Keshub Chunder Sen In the first four articles Professor Datta attempted to delineate the character of the three great leaders of the Brahmo Somaj, inviting his readers to *behold the man*, Keshub Chunder Sen. But in interpreting Keshub it became necessary to deal with his doctrine of Inspiration, and the writer

was gradually led to discuss at length the Cooch Behar Marriage, the Brahmo Somaj of India, the Constitution of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, and the career of Pundit Bijoy Krishna Goswami. Viewed in this light the articles may be said to be a study of Keshub Chunder Sen and his times, covering a large ground by dealing with points hitherto not discussed at all.

The Manner

As regards the mode of presentation, the manner, the style, though no doubt determined by the subject and the occasion, it is strictly personal, and however much we may like or dislike it, it should never tempt us to lose sight of the *matter* Professor Datta himself says —

"The thought that I have almost finished the most disagreeable part of my duty,—the dirty work of washing the stains we have ourselves cast on the great Fathers of our Church, gives me considerable relief For the effective discharge of my duty I had sometimes to use very harsh words, like the washerman using caustic alkalis or fuming acids,—and that against some of my best friends and benefactors, hoping that they will serve as eye-openers, and impress upon our minds the necessity of setting our house in order, undoing the evil we did to ourselves and our posterity by wronging our own prophets and *rishis*"

The Author

The writer, the thing written, and the subject or the occasion demanding utterance,—these are inseparably connected. These articles of Professor Datta constitute a witness to the reality of the New Dispensation. There is something elemental in the passionate spontaneity and impetuosity of this witness which raises it at once to the height of a genuine religious confession and a historic vindication. This fact was noticed in the very first

appreciation that came to us from Brother Nanda Lal Sen of Karachi, who referred to them as "Pauline Epistles." "How am I to be straitened till it be accomplished!"—and in the accomplishment of the task the writer has neither spared himself nor others. He has pressed into the service everything that has come to him. The varied experiences of his life as a student, teacher, writer, a pilgrim in England and a Government official in India,—all have yielded their share of material in the working out of this eloquent witness. We do not know of any person living so well equipped for this particular work. We see in it the hand of Providence; we feel it as God's own choosing!

ERṚATA

Please Read	*For*	*Page*	*Lne*
opened	opended	9	2
results	resulr	34	21
or	ot	34	22
famulies	faımlies	53	27
dıscharged	dscharged	53	33
three	there	91	14
other	othe	132	33
Brahmo Dharma O Navavidhan	Brahmo Dharma O etc.	145	footnote
Apprentice	Appentice	239	last lne

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY Page 1

The author, an old sinner of the Theistic Church of India, p.1—From 1876 to 1916 without the bread of life supplied by the New Dispensation, p 1—A member of the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj says, "The Brahmo Somaj is dead," p.2—The warning taken by the author led to the writing of "Behold The Man," p 3

CHAPTER I. THE EVANGELIST OF THE BRAHMO SOMAJ Page 4

Who was the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj ? p. 4—Was it Rammohun ? Was it Devendranath ? THE RAJA NEVER FOUNDED A SOMAJ. P 7—The *Gayatri* made a fetish: BRAHMO SOMAJ SOMEWHAT IN OUR SENSE FOUNDED BY MAHARSHI, 1839, p. 8—The Trust Deed of Rammohun went a great deal beyond what was practised Keshub appeals to this when elaborating his idea of Progressive Brahmoism He is the Brahmo Somaj with its present form of worship, p 10—The Maharshi emancipates the Brahmoism of Rammohun from the thraldom of *Gayatri*, p. 11—Rammohun and Maharshi's ideals compared with Keshub's, p. 12—The question of caste in Maharshi's time: His discarding the Brahminical thread The Brahmo Somaj of the Maharshi a great advance upon that of the Raja, p. 13—The voice (*Adesh*) of God commanding him to instal Keshub as Minister (*Achariya*), p 14—The two together were like yoke-fellows in the service of the Lord KESHUB THE TRUE FOUNDER OF THE BRAHMO SOMAJ IN OUR SENSE, p. 15—His *Maghotsav* Address in the Adi Somaj in 1864: His ideal of heaven was man and woman working together for God, p. 15—Exhaustive programme of Keshub's activities, p. 15—The question who founded the Brahmo Somaj answered · The heart-rending cry of the *Stree Sudras* (womanhood) of India to the Most High: The Brahmo Somaj of Keshub was Heaven's reply to the broken hearts of suffering humanity: His "Voice from the Himalaya," 1868: He was the true Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj, p 18—THE THREE LEADERS LIKE THREE SOWERS AND THEIR SEED The Raja and the *Gayatri*, the Maharshi and the *Tattwabodhini Sabha*, p 19—Keshub came last: Three in one, one in three, The grandfather, the father and the son, p.

20—THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP: Difference of forty-three years between Maharshi and Rammohun: Devendranath as a boy charmed with Rammohun's face: Maharshi addressing Keshub as *undivided in heart* (*abhinna hridaya*), p. 21—Keshub always looked upon the Maharshi as his spiritual father. The *Tattwabodhini's* remarks in 1870 about the Brahmo Somaj of India: Keshub and Devendranath at one in spirit about propagation of Brahmoism among the masses: But a class of politicians among the latter broke away from Keshub, p. 22

CHAPTER II. CONSTITUTION IN THE BRAHMO SOMAJ Page 24

Carlyle and Maharshi Devendranath's conceptions of Great Men Keshub pre-eminently the Great Man of the Progressive Brahmo Somaj, p 24—"The commissioned of God" and not as Pundit S N Shastri says 'earth's delegates to Heaven," p. 25—The development of the Brahmo Somaj from the *Brahma Sabha* of Rammohun through the *Brahmo Mandir* of Maharshi to the New Dispensation of Keshub: From Jan 23, 1830 to Jan 25, 1880 when the New Dispensation was proclaimed, pp 26, 27—Keshub and Mahomed Carlyle's remarks, p 28—The three leaders against "votes of the majority" of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, p 28—THE QUESTION OF A CONSTITUTION coming into prominence after the split of 1865 Keshub's warning in the *Indian Mirror* 1869, p 29—Difference between secular and spiritual Experts in matters temporal and experts in matters spiritual Keshub's solution Bifurcation of Authority, p. 30—Rammohun and the *Atmiya Sabha*, then attending Mr. Adam's *Divine Service*, p 31—Proposal for a place of public meeting of their own carried out at a hired house of one Kamal Lochan Bose Saturday evening meetings there conducted by Ram Chandra Vidyavagish Germ of Keshub's idea of the sovereignty of the people, p 32—THE BEGINNINGS: The Upasana Somaj started on Magh 11, 1751 (Bengali Year) at new building purchased The Trust Deed a most remarkable document· Rammohun's prophetic vision of the character of the congregation yet to be evolved, p 33—It foreshadowed the New Dispensation proclaimed by Keshub in 1880, p 34—Rammohun's ideal of Universal Church *subjective* while Keshub's New Dispensation objectively realised it, p 36—Development in Form of Worship through the three leaders. Keshub completely delivered the Brahmo Somaj from the *Gayatri*, p. 37—BIFURCATION OF DUTY AND AUTHORITY necessary for healthy growth applied to Rammohun's arrangements, p 38– Model of a constitution considered more in detail, p 41—Akshaya Kumar's *Atmiya Sabha*

of 1856 compelling Maharshi to leave for the Hills, p. 42—Condition of Brahmo Somaj from 1830 to 1841 not hopeful: The services of Ram Chandra Vidyavagish in those days, p. 43—Lessons from Rammohun's arrangements, *adhikari vichara*: LEADERSHIP TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL, p 44—Ram Chandra as minister, and Radha Prosad, Baikuntha Nath and Radhanath Tagore as Trustees, pp 44, 45—The Trustees having a subordinate place in the Somaj, p 46—Who is a Brahmo? The Maharshi's answer, "He whose aim is Brahma," p 46—What is Brahmoism or the Brahmo Somaj? Maharshi's answer, "The Brahmo Somaj is pre eminently a spiritual body" p 47—Keshub's prophecy in 1869: His *Pracharak Sabha* and *Sri Durbar* an improvement upon the ideas of Rammohun: Its insistence upon unanimity in all its decisions p 48—MINISTERS AND THEIR MAINTENANCE Light thrown by the Trust Deed of Rammohun Bijoy Krishna taking offence at Maharshi's offer to bear expenses of his family Difference in this respect between his and Keshub's ideals and those of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, p. 49—The contributions of Dwarkanath Tagore to the Adi Somaj as *Dakshina* (beneficiary), p 51—Rammohun's ideal about independence of ministers finds fulfilment in Keshub: p 52—MISSIONARIES CALLED OR VOTED? The Brahmo Somaj, a religious not a political body: "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, motto of the latter, p 52—The form of Church-government of the Brahmo Somaj should be based on disinterested love and self-effacement, Divine Inspiration and voice of conscience: Keshub outlines it in 1865, p. 53—Mammon and the political spirit of barter: The spirit of Mr A M Bose in the Indian Association, p 54—The spirit of the band of missionaries working with Keshub: Stories of Bhai Umanath, Sadhu Aughorenath and Pt Bijoy Krishna, pp 54, 55—Intercaste marriages in the Brahmo Somaj, p 57—Durga M. Das, how drawn to Keshub: Study of Theodore Parker Keshub's tour in East Bengal, p. 58—KESHUB AND ANUSTHANIC BRAHMOS: Carlyle on universal history If Plato is philosophy Keshub is Brahmoism, p. 61—Pt Shastri initiated by Keshub in 1869, p 62—The good old days in the sixties: Keshub's speech on Oct. 30, 1864, p 62—Harmony of unity and freedom p 63—Truth is Brahmoism: Difference between Rajnarain and Keshub, p. 63—The Brahmo Somaj nebulous and fluent in the days of Rammohun, Devendranath and Keshub, p. 65—The constitution of a political body like the Indian Association thrust upon it by the Protestors, p. 65—Similar attempt by Akshaya Kumar in 1853: Twisting the Cooch Behar Marriage into a handle for party purposes, p. 66—Timocracy in the Brahmo Somaj p 67

CHAPTER III COOCH BEHAR MARRIAGE CONTROVERSY Page 68

PUNDIT SHASTRI'S "VERSION" MISCALLED "HISTORY": Its express purpose casting mud on the memory of Keshub, p 68—Sasipada Banerji of the Provisional Sub-committee appointed to watch the course of agitation, Feb. 8, 1878· The author's talk with him and the latter's query, p. 69—This book the writer's answer, p. 70—Keshub before the Protestors like a "hare whom hounds and horns pursue," p. 71—Both Shastri and Ananda Mohan initiated by Keshub, p. 71—Keshub meekly bore the kicks from lawyer politicians, p 72—The author's task a delicate one: Lying between the Scylla of ingratitude to the true Founder (Keshub) and the Charybdis of ingratitude to the three leaders of the Protest Movement, p. 73—THE SAMADARSHI PARTY AND THE SCHISM OF 1878, p 74—Hegel's thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, and the Brahmo ideal of life, p 75—The harmonious development of *jnan, bhakti, karma* and *yoga*: men from all kinds of motive good, bad and indifferent flock to the Brahmo Somaj in its early days, p 75—Three classes of men prominent, (1) The Rationalist, (2) The Social Reformer on European lines, (3) The Intuitionalist, p 76—Pt Shastri in his *Samadarshi*, 1876, ridiculing Keshub's doctrine of Inspiration and Special Dispensation,—The latter headed by Keshub, (party Number One), the former headed by A M. Bose (party Number Two), p 76—The author condemns himself in supporting party Number Two, p 77—The doctrine of Adesh of Rammohun, Devendranath and Keshub Chunder, p. 77—THE PROTEST LEADERS' CREED CRITICISED, pp 78, 79—J. S. Mill and Herbert Spencer quoted, p 79—Majority-worshippers and the old *avatarabad*, p 80—Lynching in U S A, p 80—Akshaya Kumar of *Atmiya Sabha* resuscitated in the Protest Leaders' creed How could they win the sympathy of the Maharshi? p 81—How did the majority doctrine originate? p. 82—A M Bose coming from England with a brain-load of political cargos of the democratic type Leaders of the Indian Association mostly Brahmos, p 83—The Representative Assembly, the thin end of the wedge for ousting Keshub: The author's letter about *Kartabhajas* being members of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, p 84—At the Town Hall meeting a *Kartabhaja* was appointed as first Assistant Secretary. The lust of power, p 85—Our sad discovery that "Our house was left unto us desolate," p 86—THE THREE OBNOXIOUS DOCTRINES: Great Men, Special Dispensation and *Adesh*, p 86—Maharshi about Great Men and *Adesh*, pp 87, 88—What Keshub says in 1866. Pt Shastri initiated three years after that: His enthusiasm and admiration for Keshub up to 1873, p. 90—As editor of the

Samadarshi slowly drifting away from Keshub, p. 91—Miss Collet as king-maker: The theatre of warfare transferred to London. Collet the Protestors' Trinitarian ally there, p. 91—Miss Collet's character analysed, p. 92—Strange combinations: The Protestors with Miss Collet in England, and the Sadharan Somaj with the Adi Somaj in India to eviscerate Keshub, p. 93—Bhai Banga Chandra Roy and Miss Collet about *Adesh*, p. 94—P C Mozoomdar's report taken as *suppressio veri*: Anonymous writer *Sarvaspakshi* believed, pp 96, 97—Miss Collet's meddlesomeness, p. 98—Miss Cobbe's letter to the *Christian Life*, p 98—Prof Max Muller's remarks to the author, p 99—Rev Mr Voysey's opinions on the Cooch Behar Marriage, p. 100—Lack of devotional fervour among English Unitarians and theists, p. 101—Keshub nationalizing the universal theism of the Brahmo Somaj as early as 1869, p 102—His prophecy about war between Theism and Deism, p. 103—Doctrine of Inspiration in 1866 and 1881, p 103—The Protestors' mis-statement of the doctrine, p. 104—Cardinal Newman quoted, p. 105—Standard of morality raised by Keshub, p 107—"The Protestors' *ipse dixit* that Keshub's Inspiration was immoral" criticised, p 107 ff—The charge of indirectly sanctioning idolatry, p. 111—The Protestors' skill in manufacturing truth to order, p 112—Straining at a gnat, swallowing camels, p 115—The charge of countenancing caste, p 115—Not Rammohun, not Devendranath, but Keshub taught us to renounce caste, p. 116—The sanctioning of Cooch Behar marriage is openly discarding it, p 116—Story about the Maharajah of Tipperah, p 117—Keshub's martyrdom in the Cooch Behar marriage, p. 118—Idolatry and the Brahmo Somaj, p 120—Dislike for the name of *Hari* (God), p. 121—The virus of *Kartabhaja* among the Protestors, p 122—The author's "Shankara and Vedanta" quoted by Max Muller, p 123—Out-Bairing Bain, p 123—Carlyle on idolatry Symbols and symbolism: Brahmos and Hindus equally guilty of idolatry, p 124—The spirit without the form (*Pauttalikata, nirakara* and *sakara*) p 125—Durga M. Das' remark, p 125—Keshub guarding against idolatry His *Homa* and flag ceremony, p. 126—The National Flag, p 128—Pt Shastri's *Harinam* phobia, p 128—Carrying his rationalism beyond Mill and Bain, p 130—The author's conducting Harvest Festival Service, in New Church, Manchester, p 130—Was it idolatry? p. 131—Many members of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj charged with idolatry, p 131—Inter-caste and International Marriages. The ideal of our Brahmo Somaj different from that of Adi Somaj about same: The Adi Somaj ideal Vedic, ours international, p 131—Keshub's sermon on Act III, 1872, p. 132—International

marriages becoming quite frequent. p 132—THE COOCH BEHAR MARRIAGE AS A MODEL, p 134—"Complete overthrow of Hinduism and idolatry," Gour Govinda Roy quoted, p. 135—His and P C Mozoomdar's Joint Statement about the marriage, p 136—*Pt Shastri's confession thirty years after, "Keshub not impelled by any filthy motive,"* p 137—*Kartabhajas* as ministers in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, p 138—Keshub, miscalled "mystic," is realist of realists, p 139—The Cooch Behar marriage a gigantic effort to give objective reality to a subjective ideal of Universal Brotherhood, p 139—Let us be thankful to Keshub for this model of an international marriage, p 140—THE MARRIAGE PROVIDENTIAL, ITS FRUITS, p. 140—The example followed by other Ruling Princes, p 141—Its fruit for the Brahmo Somaj, for India, and for the whole world, p 143—Keshub's "Unto our enemies," p 143—The Protestors' vilification of Keshub, p 144—Quotations from the "Brahmo Public Opinion," p 146—All calumnies meant for consumption in Europe. p 147—A filthy drama published in *Roy Press* of Kedar Nath Roy, p 147—Pt. Shastri's "Personal Sketch of Mr. Sen" analysed and answered, pp. 148-154—THE SEQUEL, p 154—The New Dispensation according to Pt Shastri is "outside the limits of the Brahmo Somaj, creed-bound and man-bound like Mahomedanism," p 155—This statement criticised, p. 156—The author's conclusion, "We have literally stoned and killed our prophet," p 158

CHAPTER IV THE SCHISM AND MISS COLLET'S OPPORTUNITY Page 159

Miss Collet a Trinitarian Christian, not a member of the Brahmo Somaj, p 159—Her contempt for Unitarianism whether Hindu or Christian, p 160—Speaks patronizingly of Rammohun's large ambitions, p 161—Accuses him of Deism, p 162—Calling Brahmos spiritual Eurasians, p 162—Rammohun as seen in his hymns different from Miss Collet's estimate, p 163—Rammohun on direct God-vision, p 163—Leaders like Pt Shastri misled Miss Collet, p. 163—Pt Shastri on the Mission of Brahmoism · Carelessly speaks of "Naturalism and Independence," p 164—What Keshub meant by *Prakriti* as opposed to *Vikriti*, p 165—The synthetic unity of the New Dispensation, p 166—Shastri in lucid moments speaks of it as prophetic, p. 167—The spirit of the New Dispensation at work in the whole history of the Brahmo Somaj since 1820, p 168—Miss Collet not identified with the Brahmo Somaj in theology, p. 168—KESHUB HER FAVOURITE HERO BEFORE THE COOCH BEHAR MARRIAGE, p 169—Her Life and Letters of Rammohun begun

only a little before her death, p 170—Her article in *Contemporary Review* on "Indian Theism and its Relation to Christianity," p. 170—Keshub's Brahmoism before 1878—might supply the "hidden link," after that it was a dangerous rival to Christianity, p 171—HER POLICY OF DIVIDE ET IMPERA, p 172—Her interest in Rammohun was an afterthought, p. 173—According to Rammohun she is more an idolator than the Hindu himself, p 174—Yet Messrs A M. Bose and P K. Roy sought her help in their campaign against Keshub, p 175—Four conditions Keshub Chunder Sen laid down before the marriage, p 176—The marriage to be a betrothal only, p. 176—Universal inspiration was Keshub's teaching · Opposed to Miss Collet's idea, p 177—The Protestors shift ground regarding Inspiration, p 179—Divine Inspiration an accepted doctrine of the Brahmo Somaj from the beginning, p 180—Infallibility not man's but God's, p 180—Shastri's sub-conscious faith in infallible Divine Inspiration, p. 181—Keshub claims infallibility for God: Shastri's charge against Keshub · Binding down the "Consciences of men" refuted, p 182—Keshub's utterances on Christ in 1879 and 1881 Displeased Miss Collet, p. 182—Keshub's proclamation of "India's Mother" she characterizes as an "undisguised piece of blasphemy," p 184—"Mr. Sen's teaching has ceased to be Brahmic," p 184—Keshub's *Sadhusamagama* she calls "erratic teaching," p. 186—Her statement criticised, p. 186—P C Mozoomdar on "Will the Brahmo Somaj last?", p. 187—Her artful appeal to Mozoomdar, p 188—Her efforts to "completely ruin" Keshub. But Keshub rose from his ashes, p 189—MISS COLLET ADOPTS RAMMOHUN AS THE PROPHETIC TYPE OF THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF INDIA, p 189—With the Protest leaders' help she unearths Rammohun's mummy, p. 190—The worship of Jesus Christ as much idolatry, according to Rammohun, as the Hindu's worship of *Rama*, p. 191—Rammohun's Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans, p 192—Miss Collet misreading Rammohun's real object went in raptures India to become Anglicized, professing popular Christianity, p 194—Her interest in Sadharan Brahmo Somaj and Rammohun explained, p 195—THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT HER FINAL MOVE, p 195—It would convert India into a vast *Chunnagulee* Irony of fate, p 196—*Revue Encyclopœdia*, Sismondi speaks of him as an apostle of Christianity, p. 198—Brahmos called *kistan* (Christian) since Rammohun's days, p 198—Dr. Carpenter on Rammohun's faith before death, p 199—Rev Messrs Jay and Warner's testimonies quoted by Miss Collet, p. 200—Carpenter the best authority: Sufficient for us Brahmos to discredit Miss Collet's surmises, pp 200–206—THE ALLIANCE OF THE CRIPPLE

AND THE BLIND · Brahmos of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj on the horns of a dilemma: Looked at with Miss Collet's eyes Raja Rammohun neither founder of the Brahmo Somaj nor Father of New India, p 206ff.—Her interest in Cooch Behar Marriage now better understood, p. 212—THE ALLIES IN THE ALLIANCE, p 214—The evisceration of Keshub was their aim, p 215—Without Miss Collet they were a body of Liliputians tackling a Gulliver · Misleading foreigners: Not a Unitarian or a Theist but a Trinitarian lady in the grotesque combination of the cripple and the blind, p 215—Campaigning on a point of conscience among people unconnected with the community, p 216—Their object really suicidal, p 216—The drolleries and hearsays of the *Saraspakshi*, p 216.

CHAPTER V THE SADHARAN BRAHMO SOMAJ Page 218

Religion and politics · Politics concerned with party interests, Religion with hunger after righteousness: One self-asserting and the other self-effacing, p 218—A large number of Sadharan Brahmos dabblers in politics No genuineness either in religion or in politics, p. 219—The Maharshi and Akshaya Kumar Dutt quoted, p 220—BIJOY K GOSWAMI AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SADHARAN BRAHMO SOMAJ p. 220—Keshub's ideal of Brahmo Somaj is worship: Bijoy Krishna the first man of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj in 1878, p 221—In Shastri's "*History*" in 1911 he is ignored, p. 221—Shastri wants himself to be recognised as the *first man*, p 222—The author's conversation with Sir Alfred Croft on the matter, p 222—Deliberate omission of Bijoy Krishna's name, p 223—Goswami leaving Sadharan Somaj Mission House, reason, taking of *Harinam* forbidden by Committee, p 225—GOSWAMI'S RESIGNATION OF MINISTRY, p 225—Conduct of Committee "perfectly bureaucratic," p 227—Their much-vaunted democracy meant for a show against Keshub, p. 228—Goswami's Humble Statement, p. 229ff —His Second Letter, p 231ff —*Personnel* of the Sub-committee judging Goswami: Two were *Kartabhajas*, p. 234ff.—We Brahmos of the Sadharan School like Railway wagons slipped from their engine after separation from Keshub, p. 236 —*Kartabhajaism* in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, p 236—Charges against Goswami and the author's remarks against them, p 238ff —*Kartabhajas* like Theosophists not necessarily believers in a personal God, p 241—The Report of the Sub-committee full of misrepresentations accepted by the Executive Committee, p. 243—Pt Shastri the Pope of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj: We fools were tools in his hands, p. 243—No

General Meeting was called, p 244—We pilloried Keshub in 1878, Bijoy Krishna in 1886, Ananda Mohan in 1904, and lastly Pt Shastri himself in connection with *Sadhan Asram*. Nemesis for our own *gurumara vidya* (*prophet-killing* cult), p. 244—THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SADHARAN BRAHMO SOMAJ, p 247ff.

CHAPTER VI. BEHOLD THE MAN .. Page 266

KESHUB AS A SHEEP BEFORE SHEARERS, p. 266—MY REVENGE: A Prayer, p. 271.

Illustrative Text

"हन्ति श्रेयांसि सर्वाणि पुंसो महदतिक्रमः"।

श्रीमद्भागवतम् १०-४-४६।

"The wrong men do to the noble ones ends in the total ruin of the wrong-doers themselves."

Srimadbhagavatam X-4-46.

BEHOLD THE MAN

INTRODUCTORY

An old sinner of the Theistic Church of India, one of the fold of the great pastor of the Brahmo Somaj, Keshub Chunder Sen, I was like a lost sheep, away from his flock, and had been wandering like an Ishmaelite among his opponents, for forty years, from 1876 to 1916 I had almost forgotten the original ideal of selfless faith and love set before us by Keshub Chunder in the early seventies and before, which roused our country from her spiritual and moral slumber of ages. Like a ship without a rudder I wandered aimless, a trifler among triflers in religion, without even the hope of ever reaching the true harbour where my soul could rest The heavenly light, that I had seen beaming from the faces of those few who have been fed and nourished on the true bread of life supplied by the New Dispensation, I have long been cut off from by the indiscretion of my youth I almost despaired thinking that our Heavenly Father had put out the light he had lighted among us, for the spiritual illumination of ourselves and the world, as a punishment for our pride and ingratitude Faith and absolute self-surrender to the Holy Spirit, fervent worship and unpretentious simplicity, modesty and humility, self-less love and ungrudging devotion to the service of our fellowmen, and spotless purity of life and character, so vividly realised in the lives of the great Brahmo leaders, which first opened our eyes and attracted us to the Brahmo Somaj in the early seventies, I thought were things of the past. But I am delighted to find I was mistaken. I feel quite charmed to see those noble

traits of character, still reflected as in the days of old, in the faces of a few hitherto unknown to me.

Like the return of the Prodigal Son, Divine Providence has been pleased to bring me back to them, after forty years of wandering in the wilderness (1876 to 1916). "Like a long-parted mother with her child" the New Dispensation Church has taken me into her bosom again I had proved myself unworthy to be called a disciple of the great Master, Keshub Chunder Sen, having for forty years, been a rebel among rebels. But, howsoever unworthy, I feel impelled to bear testimony before the public to the precious lessons the great Master imprinted in my youthful mind, during the five or six years that I was directly under his influence, which have been as the loadstar (the *Dhruvatara*) of my life, saving me from absolute spiritual and moral death during the years of my wanderings at home and abroad These lessons alone, I firmly believe, can save our beloved Brahmo Somaj from moral and spiritual death, unless we take warning betimes I am not singular in sounding this warning. There are many others once belonging to Keshub's fold, who unlike myself have not returned, who see the same danger ahead

A Brahmo friend of mine, a professor and for several years a member of the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, first sounded before me the note of alarm, about 13 years ago, frankly telling me "The Brahmo Somaj, which you joined (meaning thereby the Brahmo Somaj of the early seventies), does not now exist." His words which still ring in my ears, afforded me good food for reflection. Another Brahmo friend of mine, who to-day stands in the front ranks of our politicians, when he came to learn that I was giving some time and attention to a critical examination of the past history of the Brahmo Somaj, expressed regret, saying: "The Brahmo Somaj is

dead. Why does he spend his time and energy in a hopeless task?" I wonder if my friend seriously thought that the Brahmo Somaj was dead, and my labours really as fruitless as the pruning of a rotten tree It would have been more Brahmo-like if my friend had said "The Brahmo Somaj is dead. Long live the Brahmo Somaj!" The Brahmo Somaj cannot with truth be said to be dead, while still there are with us a few of those chips of the old block, though to-day they stand almost with one foot in the other world, a few of those brave fighters of the Lord's battles, a few of those weather-beaten chosen vessels of the Lord on whom He showered His grace and inspiration. For truth's sake, for our own sake, for the sake of our Somaj and our posterity, let us not say that the Brahmo Somaj is dead God's Brahmo Somaj will not die, cannot die, though we may prove ourselves unworthy Let us all have Faith in Divine Providence and not allow ourselves to be the victims of Giant Despair O that God would to-day after more than fifty years of separation gather together again in one flock all who once belonged to Keshub's fold!

I consider it a duty I owe to God, to our great leader, and to my community and country, that I should here record my testimony as to what I have been privileged to see. It is in the discharge of this sacred duty that I venture to place these pages before the public under the heading *Behold the Man*.

CHAPTER I

THE EVANGELIST OF THE BRAHMO SOMAJ

Raja Rammohun Roy

Who was the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj? Who brought us the gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man? Undoubtedly the Raja is a name to conjure with, and in honouring him as the "Grandfather"[1] of the Brahmo Somaj, as Keshub did, we honour the Brahmo Somaj and with it also ourselves. But can Rammohun with truth be called the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj or, as people would say, the Founder or the Father of the Brahmo Somaj?

The fact is that a few years after the great split of 1878 in the Brahmo Somaj, one section of the Somaj felt the need of a distinguished leader for a centre round whose name they might rally Keshub we had discarded. The Maharshi, who was a pronounced conservative in many respects, and more or less exclusively Hinduistic, would not suit our purposes He would not support, at least as much as we could wish, some of our social reform movements, such as discarding the Brahminical thread, and advocating widow re-marriages, inter-caste marriages, etc One reason why we felt the distance between ourselves and both Maharshi and Keshub greater than it really was, because in those days we were in tutelage under Miss Collet[2]

[1] Keshub's Bengali sermons—Maghotsav, "Unto Rammohun"

[2] Her hostility to Hinduism was pronounced Hence when Keshub called God "India's Mother," she felt so disgusted that she said

Devendranath gave us a clear idea of what he aimed at in his "Account of Experiences of 25 years," in 1864, when he said, "We cannot be sure of the spread of Brahmoism in this country if we cut ourselves off from the Hindus It was for this reason that Buddhism found no place here" Then referring to Chaitanya's violent and sudden attempt to uproot caste Devendranath says· "The very name of Vaishnavism has become, as it were, a synonym for irreligion or immorality (*adharma*) in Bengal To be encouraged by the hope that I shall be the agent of the country's advancement, by reducing the distance of time in the work of the uprooting of social and local customs, by the importation of foreign civilization is but to render the realization of our aim extremely improbable "[1]

A dead man is often safer for a leader, for inconvenient situations do not arise you can make him speak as you like For example, Miss Collet makes Rammohun the apostle of denationalization and Christianization in India[2]—Rammohun who did not discard the sacred thread even to the last day of his life! Again, it is often too true that "distance lends enchantment to the view." Rammohun had passed away at Bristol in 1833 For half a century no Brahmo thought of investing the Raja with the glory of being the "Founder" of the Brahmo Somaj But after the split of 1878, we decided to unearth his mummy, and dub it as the Founder of the Brahmo Somaj. We, with a motive no doubt, began to celebrate every year the anniversary of

"It is only after long hesitation that I have decided to reprint this undisguised piece of blasphemy" Again, when in the *Sunday Mirror* of Aug 1, 1880, Keshub spoke of God as *Lakshmi*, *Saraswati*, *Jagat-Dhatri*, she exclaimed in horror "How far is the Brahmo Somaj implicated by this erratic teaching!" (Brahmo Year Book, 1880, p 35.)

[1] Biography of Devendra Nath Tagore (in Bengali) by Ajit Kumar Chakravarti p 365

[2] S D Collet's Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy, 1900, pp 136–138

the death of Rammohun as the Founder of the Brahmo Somaj, as a counter-movement for throwing Keshub into the shade,—Keshub who alone truly represented the moral standard of the Brahmo Somaj in all its fullness.[1]

Far be it for me to belittle the services rendered to the Motherland by the Raja, who was, considering all things, the greatest luminary that ever shone on the Indian firmament in recent times With the broadest heart, with the deepest philosophy, and the most consummate scholarship, Rammohun combined in himself the most versatile genius While his heart bled to see the sufferings of his people, specially the womanhood of the country, his brain and his hands planned intellectual, moral, religious, and social reforms for the regeneration of India Like the sower of the parable he came out under a Divine commission, to sow the seed of reform in Modern India[2] We all bow to Rammohun to-day, as the father of modern Indian enlightenment generally, but it is not detracting from his greatness to add that his mind was so absolutely engrossed in effecting a general all-round improvement in India's condition, that it was not possible for him to devote his energies solely in any one particular direction The lofty grandeur of his

[1] Does it not speak volumes in proof of the tact and diplomatic skill of the Founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj that they could hold in the hollow of their hands simultaneously both the Maharshi, the apostle of Hindu nationalism as well as Miss Collet,—the zealous apostle of the Christianization of an Anglicized India? Says Miss Collet herself in her Brahmo Year Book of 1881, (p 51-52) "It may perhaps be remembered that at the first anniversary after the schism of 1878 (i e, in 1879) the Adi and the Sadharan Samajes combined to celebrate Rammohun Roy's memory at the house of Venerable Devendranath Tagore . Although some members of the Brahmo Somaj of India were present the leaders of that Somaj held aloof" I have no doubt the reader will see that they held aloof because they could see through the real motive of the organisers

[2] When I was at Bristol to see the Raja's tomb in the Arno's Vale Cemetery, a Unitarian friend of mine there, Mrs Wett, who was a phrenologist, showed me in one of the standard works of phrenology, the figure of Raja Rammohun Roy's head drawn as the ideal type of a versatile genius

unique position is so great, that we do wrong to rob another of the glory truly due to him to invest Raja Rammohun Roy with a superfluity of that commodity.

Brahmo Somaj in our sense of the term to-day means a community of the worshippers of one God freed from the thraldom of idolatry and caste The Raja never founded a Somaj Although his Trust Deed that followed may be said to have foreshadowed it What he founded was a *Brahma Sabha*,[1] that is, he fixed a place of meeting of worship of some kind As to what kind of worship it was, no one can give more reliable information than Devendranath, who says in his auto-biography: "The Vedas used to be read in a room inaccessible to Sudras. Again, one day I saw that from the pulpit of that Brahmo Somaj Ishwara Chandra Nayaratna, the colleague of Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, tried to prove that Ram the King of Ayodhya was an incarnation of God "[2] Would you call such a place of worship a Brahmo Somaj to-day? The opening of the place of worship with the formation of the memorable *Trust Deed* took place in January 1830, in a house in Calcutta. The Raja left for England ten months after the opening of this house of worship so that he had just time enough to sow the seed,[3] leaving that house of worship under a resident superintendent, much like a temple under a *Mohant* and giving the preference to daily worship as in temples over a weekly service as in churches His colleague. Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, seems to have been the first superintendent, or rather *Mohant*, who "read the Vedas in a retired room in the absence of the Sudra" as the Maharshi says Again, the Maharshi speaks of the Raja's form of worship

[1] In 1828

[2] Maharshi Devendranath's Atmajivani, Autobiography, p 34 (First Edition)

[3] Keshub's "To the Portrait of Rammohun Roy in the Albert Hall," New Dispensation, 1915, Vol I, p 278

as confined to the use of Gayatri."[1] That form of worship can only be meant for the Brahmin, Rammohun himself being one, carrying the Brahminical thread on his person all his life It was Devendranath who was the first to break away from the traditional interpretation of the Upanishads given by Sankara,[2] but Rammohun, for aught we know, accepted the interpretations of Sankara Says the Maharshi "We could not fully accept Sankara's interpretation of the Upanishads" The form of worship of Brahma actually adopted in Rammohun's *Brahma Sabha* was more or less in the line of Sankaracharya, *and not Brahmo in our sense* Non-Brahmins were excluded, that means all persons not invested with the sacred thread—scholars like Romesh Chandra Dutt and Brajendra Nath Seal, and foreigners and ladies like Miss Collet herself—would be excluded, whilst the Gayatri was made something like a fetish, and the worship a refined, verbal form of idolatry [3]

What is there in all this to entitle the Raja to be called the true Founder of the Brahmo Somaj, as it stands to-day? The Maharshi says· "There was a Brahmo Somaj before (meaning, of course, a place of meeting for Vedantic worship in the orthodox style), but now (in 1843, 11 years after the death of Rammohun) we have a Brahmo religion." The Brahmo Somaj somewhat in our sense of the term was founded on October 6, 1839, by the Maharshi under the name of *Tattwabodhini Sabha* quite independently of the Raja That the Maharshi did not owe to the Raja his idea of the Brahmo Somaj, at least directly, appears clearly from what he says: "No one was so good as

[1] Maharshi's Atmajivani, pp 35, 39.
[2] *Ibid* pp 30, 31, 102, 106
[3] Our Unitarian friends in Europe and America should also note here how far removed from their conception of Unitarianism was Rammohun's so-called Unitarian Hinduism

to give me instruction about the truth of Brahma."[1] The *Tattwabodhini Sabha* was opended after the formal worship of *Brahma*, by Devendranath and his friends in 1839 *The Maharshi amalgamated the Tattwabodhini Sabha with the Raja's Brahma Sabha*, in 1842. The Maharshi and his band of 21 were the first batch of Brahmos, who in 1843 had taken the vow of giving up the worship of finite gods, and of worshipping the one non-dual *Para-Brahma* alone

What does all this amount to ? It means that according to the Maharshi there was no *Brahmo Dharma* or religion and no Brahmo before his time, that the word Somaj was used merely in the sense of a place of meeting, and not in that of a community. Was Rammohun himself a Brahmo ? He may have been one in spirit but certainly not in the true *anusthanic* sense of the term. At least the Maharshi could not be said to have thought so, when he says specifically that there was no Brahmo before himself Rammohun unlike the Maharshi was a genuine Brahmin and carried on his person his Brahminical thread On a question like this the Maharshi's evidence ought to be conclusive It may not be irrelevant here to notice what the Raja did in England He lived like a Unitarian, attended the Unitarian church, and almost identified himself with the Carpenters of Bristol, with whom in his last days he used to dine as though he were a member of that family. In a word he did what many of us, whether Hindu or Mahomedan do in England In his Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Somaj, the Raja did indeed lay down that it would be a house of worship where all castes without distinction would meet together and worship Brahma Although it was not specifically laid down that the Non-Brahmin or Non-Hindu was entitled to take his place in the room where the Vedas were

[1] Maharshi's Atmajivani, p 6.

read, one is bound to admit that this very nearly approaches the ideal of the Brahmo Somaj,—though, of course, it was at the time a mere subjective ideal, a mere germ not realised in any practical or material form, till Keshub Chunder appeared in the field

The Trust-Deed went a great deal beyond what was actually practised, for in prescribing the form of worship for the *Brahmo Sabha*, in the "preaching," "praying" and "hymns," it showed no partiality to the Vedas or the Gayatri. The resident superintendent also need only be a person of good repute and well-known for his knowledge, piety and morality. The preachings are also to be such as to "strengthen the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds"

In this there lies the seed, the original idea of the Progressive Brahmo Somaj, and to this Keshub appealed when he elaborated his idea of progressive Brahmoism [1] In Keshub's hand this idea grew into the goodly tree of the Brahmo Somaj of India with its ideal of the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man and its final consummation in the Harmony of all religions and sects in the New Dispensation Rammohun Roy cannot therefore with truth be called the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj Call him rather the Grandfather of the Brahmo Somaj to indicate the special character of his connection with the Brahmo movement. Keshub indeed very justly speaks of the Raja as the Grandfather, and of the Maharshi as the Father of the Brahmo Somaj But Keshub is the Brahmo Somaj, with its present form of worship, its discarding of caste and child-marriage, its encouraging of intercaste, inter-racial and international marriages, widow remarriages, female education and social reform generally Rammohun may be called the seed, [2] but

1 Keshub's Bengali Sermons—Maghotsav,—"Unto Rammohun."
2 Referring to the Catholic ideal embodied in the *Trust-Deed*

Keshub is the fruit-bearing tree of Brahmoism. It was in this sense that Keshub himself called Raja Rammohun Roy the harbinger even of the New Dispensation.

Maharshi Devendranath Tagore

Maharshi Devendranath in a sense may be called the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj in as much as he laid the foundation of the *Tattwabodhini Sabha* in 1839 At its second anniversary he said –"Owing to the spread of English education we cannot now like ignorant people, offer worship to wood or stone after imagining them to be God."[1] The Maharshi was out and out non-idolatrous and would not even confine himself to the Raja's verbal fetish of the Gayatri, though he was a great deal too much for confining himself to the Vedantic texts in Sanskrit for purposes of worship To him is due the credit of emancipating the Brahmo Somaj from the thraldom of the Brahminical Gayatri, and popularising the public worship of the Brahmos Says the Maharshi, "I desire that all men, even the lowest,

militating against the exclusive Hindu character assumed in the working out of that ideal, Keshub thus writes in the fortnightly Indian Mirror of 1865 —

"This Hindu aspect forms an important incident in the history of the Brahmo Somaj and deserves our careful considerations. Whether it is justifiable on the ground of nationality or what is usually called reform policy is a question which does not concern us in our present inquiry But there can be no manner of doubt that it is a great anomaly and inconsistency in Rammohun Roy's Church and that it militates against the essential principles of the Trust Deed. For while on the one hand this memorable legal document distinctly set forth the catholic character of the church and declared its real object to be to unite "all sorts and descriptions of people," in the worship of the Supreme Creator, and to strengthen the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds," the actual proceedings of its meeting bore such an exclusive Hindu character as to render it virtually as a *sectarian* Hindu Church And hence is it that it assumed the form, and also acquired in some quarters the appropriate name of the Hindu Unitarian Church."

[1] Maharshi's Atmajibani, p 24.

worship Brahma. I therefore decided to leave those who can worship by means of the Gayatri free to do so. But those who cannot do that should be free to have recourse to any simple method of giving themselves up to the contemplation of God."[1] This was when he was only 28 years old.

Nevertheless it is true that both Rammohun Roy in confining the public worship in his *Brahma Sabha* to the use of the Gayatri, and the Maharshi in confining his devotional preaching in his Somaj to the elucidation of the texts from the Vedas and the Upanishads, were not thinking of themselves but were only adapting their ideas and ideals to the Hindu community of their time, to which at least the Maharshi expected to confine the movement Compared with Keshub's broad ideal, consisting of natural, effusive adoration and prayer, expressed in plain and popular Bengali, and also compared with Keshub's ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man of his earlier years, and of the harmony of all religions and sects of his later days, both Rammohun's and Maharshi's ideals of public worship were like little wells compared with the open sea

The Maharshi may also be said to have founded a true Brahmo community, or the Brahmo Somaj in the sense in which we use the name, and also to have defined, in a sense, the fundamental principles of *Brahmo Dharma* (faith), under the title of *Brahmo Dharmabijam*. But the cardinal defect in the fundamental principles of Brahmoism laid down therein is that there is no reference to social reform as coming within the purview of the Brahmo Somaj,—unless, of course, it was implied in *Brahma's priya karya*, or "in good works that God approves"

The Maharshi personally, unlike the Raja, was a

[1] Maharshi's Atmajivani, p. 39.

Brahmin, outside the pale of the orthodox group[1] and encouraged by the example of Keshub *cum* Bijoy and their band of the *Sangat*, he and his eldest son did even throw off their Brahminical thread. It is to be inferred from this that though the Maharshi would not make the abjuration of caste a necessary condition of one's becoming a real Brahmo, he himself was against caste. The caste question was indeed raised in the Brahmo Somaj he founded He says. "Rakhaldas Haldar of Jagatdal proposed that Brahmos should throw off the sacred thread. Rakhal Das's father coming to hear of the proposal of throwing off the thread, was about to stab himself"[2] The caste question was thus taken up by the Maharshi but abandoned on account of the difficulties he foresaw It seems from prudential—probably from matrimonial and legal—considerations, that he did invest his two youngest sons with the sacred thread, for which he saw no necessity in his own case, nor in that of his other sons.[3]

Though as regards abjuration of caste and social reform generally, the Brahmo Somaj founded by the Maharshi cannot be truly called a Brahmo Somaj, it must be admitted that the Brahmo Somaj of the Maharshi was a great advance upon that of the Raja in its social outlook and in the form of worship For in reality it was a great deal more when we come to think of the ideas of God-vision, prayer and inspiration, the true foundation of the Brahmo Somaj, which were like the bread of life to the Maharshi himself, though strangely enough they seem to have been confined in his case within the sheep-pen of the Upanishads.

But apart from all this we are bound to call the Maharshi an evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj, when we reflect that guided by the Divine Spirit, it was he who as

1 Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore by Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, p 3

2 Maharshi's Atmajivani p 38 3 *Ibid.*, Appendix p 21.

the President installed Keshub as the *Acharya* or Minister of the Somaj, with the title of *Brahmananda*. The Venerable Maharshi himself thus describes it :—

"I had pitched my tent at a place called Guskarah, not far from Burdwan, in a mango tope, containing thousands of trees It was about mid day. And there the voice came to me saying 'Appoint Keshub as the Minister of the Brahmo Somaj The Somaj shall grow and prosper under him I returned to Calcutta and determined to make the appointment The elderly Brahmos entreated me not to do this But the voice of God had come to me, I had received the inspiration and I determined to act accordingly [1] I addressed Keshub saying 'God Himself is now bathing you with the immortal waters At His command I instal you as the Minister'. . O Brahmos, from now on give heed with willing reverence to the words of this Calcutta Minister, and I am sure the glory of the Brahmo religion will be enhanced thereby.' [2]

Be it noted here that it was Keshub Chunder also who in reverent love invested Devendranath with the title of "Maharshi" and 'the Father of the Brahmo Somaj' [3] The two together like yoke-fellows in the service of the Lord, earnestly sought for and found the Divine light and heard the Divine voice in their heart of hearts Together they founded the *Brahmavidyalaya*, and *Sangat* in 1861, for the training of the young, who would in time to come, bear the torch of light and dispense peace and comfort to all that are weary and heavy-laden among mankind. From that point of view the Maharshi, or rather the Maharshi *cum* Keshub, may be said to be the Evangelist of the

[1] Life and Teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen, (2nd Edition) by P C Mozoomdar, p 88

[2] Maharshi Devendranath Tagore by Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, pp 344-45

[3] Maharshi Devendranath by Bhabasindhu Dutt, p 324

Brahmo Somaj,—the part played by the Maharshi very much resembling that of John the Baptist in the Christian Dispensation.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN

Do you still need to be told who founded the Brahmo Somaj? Who but he, that breaking through all barriers of racial pride or prejudice, first proclaimed the creed of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Universal humanity, nobly expressed by Upadhyaya Gour Govinda Roy, in glowing Sanskrit verses which have become the motto of the Brahmo Somaj: "This wide universe is the sacred temple of God, the pure in heart, the most sacred of shrines, Truth is the everlasting scripture. Faith is the root of all religion; Love is the true spiritual culture, the destruction of selfishness true asceticism So declare the Brahmos?" Who but he *that guided by the Spirit* first conceived the idea of a Universal Church to embrace all the nations of the world, as in a great family, who in his Maghotsav address of 1864, in the Adi Somaj, said: "The world is our sanctuary, natural wisdom is our sacred scripture, worship is our means of salvation, purification of the hearts is our attainment, and every pious man is our teacher and guide?" [1] Who but he, that guided by God was the first to declare a moral crusade against the degrading hierarchy of caste, that was the first to realise in our days and in our society the sacred teaching of the Vedas—*Sastriko Dharmamacharet*, that shared with his wife the glory of the ministration of the Brahmo Somaj in 1862, in spite of the most serious opposition? Who but he whose ideal of heaven realised in life was man and woman walking abreast to that goal?

Who founded the Brahmo Somaj? Who but he that

[1] Maghotsav (published by the Adi Brahmo Somaj), p 198.

was one of the first to set the example of inter-caste marriage among the Hindus, amongst the first to introduce social and moral reform, that made famine relief and all kinds of selfless public service the work of the Brahmo Somaj, and in 1860 when a dreadful famine visited Upper India, like a ministering angel and as the right hand of the Maharshi, held a Famine Relief Service, and realised and spent large sums of money on relief operations, that was the first to take steps for the relief of sufferers from malaria in Lower Bengal, in which Pandit Bijoy Krishna was as his right hand? Who but he that was the first to recognise in this country the consanguinity of the great religions of the world, and as early as 1869, delivered his Lecture on the "Future Church" and said. "No religion is wholly false,"[1] and to give a practical expression to that recognition of consanguinity was the first to have the *Sloka Samgraha* compiled, consisting of devotional extracts from the Bible, the Quoran, the Zend Avesta, etc., incorporated with those from the Hindu Scriptures? Who but he that gave us a true and living Brahmo Somaj full of every kind of noble and patriotic activity—the Brahmo School, the *Sangat*, the "Indian Mirror," *Sulava Samachara*, the Normal School for ladies, etc.? Who but he that determined not to hide his light under the bushel of one country or one community, went out himself carrying the torch divine to Europe, and sent out Bhai Pratap Chunder to carry the torch to America for the benefit of all humanity? Who but he that declared, when the Brahmo Somaj of India was established, "We must form a truly Theistic Brotherhood, a family of God's children."[2]

[1] K C Sen's Lectures (in India) "The Future Church," p 88. (Brahmo Tract Society Edition)

[2] "God alone was its head?" Says Rev Mr. Mozoomdar. "It was Keshub who made its membership include every race, all men and women, whoever might wish to join it"

To answer the question "Who founded the Brahmo Somaj?" we have to understand how the Brahmo Somaj came to be. The cry had gone forth from the bleeding heart of India's masses and of India's womankind, from the Sudras and Chandals—the depressed classes, as we with patronising self-complaisance call the masses,—to the throne of the Most High against the hereditary, 'heartless hierarchy' of Brahminism How absurd were the pretensions of the Brahmins accepted by the credulous masses and handed down from father to son from time immemorial without quesion, will appear from the following from our great Law-giver Manu :—

> "The Brahmin as soon as he is born, is born as a master of the earth, he is made the Lord of all creatures for the preservation of the treasure of sacred learning. All that exists in the earth is the Brahmin's own property. When other people enjoy any thing, it is only because the Brahmin is not a cruel master".. Let the Sudra be made to work as a slave, never mind whether he has or has not been bought with a price Brahma created the Sudra to be a slave of the Brahmin Even if emancipated by his master, the Sudra is not freed from slavery for that goes with his very formation, i e, slavery is ingrained in his very nature Who can remove it from him? Without any thought whatever let the Brahmin take from the substance of the Sudra, he has nothing that really belongs to him, his property may always be taken away by his master" [1]

Even that flower of Indian Philosophy, the great Sankaracharya, defends such silly superstitions. Just and true ideas about rights, and their corresponding duties were altogether absent. The Brahmin had right alone on his side, and no duties to the Sudra, and the Sudra had duties alone on his side, and no rights as against the Brahmin. True, too true indeed, that the state of

[1] See Manu IV--80, 81, VIII 413, 414, 417 and also see VIII, 270, 273, etc

moral callousness has not much improved even to this day. To such moral callousness was added rank superstition. The heart-rending cry of "Stri-Sudras," of womankind and of the untouchables, had gone forth to the throne of the Most High His infinite mercy was moved The Brahmo Somaj was Heaven's reply to the broken hearts of suffering humanity come through Keshub Chunder Sen Said Keshub in his "Voice from the Himalayas," in 1868 —

> "Sons and daughters of India, dearly beloved brethren,—Awake arise the blessed morning of your redemption is come Rise from your death-like sleep Long, too long have you slept on the bed of idolatry and corruption Long have you borne the oppressions and cruelties of a heartless hierarchy, with hands and feet enchained in the gloomy cell of superstition Your wailings and lamentations have penetrated the vaults of heaven, and reached the Father's ears Beloved India the night of darkness and sorrow is over. May He bless my humble voice, and stir up a response in every heart! Blessed be the Holy and Merciful God for ever!"

Where shall suffering India find such comfort and hope aglow with such prophetic fire! Wring as you would you will hardly find a drop of such comfort for suffering humanity, either from the Raja's public worship by means of the Gayatri or from the Maharshi's *Brahmo Dharma-Vrjam.* The true prophet of India's religious regeneration, Keshub Chunder Sen, can thus with truth be called the Evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj.[1]

[1] We should always bear in mind, however, that Keshub strongly objected to any *man* being regarded as the founder of the Brahmo Somaj "I *shudder* to be told that a *man* founded the Brahmo Somaj" said Keshub K C Sen's Sovaker Nivedan, IV. 181 (New Edition, 1915.)

The Three Sowers and their Seed

In the light of Keshub's teachings I may illustrate the work done by these three great men,—the Raja, the Maharshi and Brahmananda,—for the Brahmo Somaj, and their mutual relation, by taking an analogy from gardening. The Most High in response to the cries of our suffering people, first sent out the Raja as a sower entrusted with seeds to sow, after a preliminary reclamation of the jungles, for the religious regeneration of India But the Raja's hands were quite full with the general work of reclamation of the social, intellectual, and political jungle of his day. All he could do for the Brahmo Somaj was to sow his seeds of religious regeneration in the germinator of the Vedic Gayatri, to be attended to by Brahminical gardeners. For want of a proper supply of water, air and light, his seeds did not germinate, and would have perished but for the advent of the Maharshi in due time.

After Rammohun's departure from this world, Providence sent out His gardener-in-chief, the *Pradhan Acharya*, as the Maharshi has rightly been called, with other and fresher seeds of religious regeneration possessing greater vitality With very great care he sowed his seeds in the germinator of the *Tattwabodhini Sabha*, containing a carefully prepared, finely pulverized and well manured soil With proper supply of water, air and light given to the seed-bed by the Maharshi and his faithful band, the seeds sprouted The Maharshi then brought those other seeds from Rammohun's germinator along with his own seeds. A very skilful gardener that the Maharshi was, he planted them out in the open seed-bed of the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj, now known as the Adi Brahmo Somaj. There he tended the seedlings as if patiently waiting for another, more or less like one "preaching in the

wilderness," till Keshub appeared in the field, whom he came to know, as if instinctively, and to recognise quite providentially, as the fittest and best equipped for the needs of the time, with a special mission, in the field of the Brahmo Somaj Indeed the Maharshi, when questioned why he did not continue his autobiography, after Keshub appeared in the field of the Brahmo Somaj, said with his usual magnanimity —

"—All that comes within Keshub's jurisdiction"

It was Keshub who came last. As it has been said, 'the first shall be last and the last first,' for it was he who really reared the great structure of the Brahmo Somaj as the Universal Church of the future, which though born in Bengal shall one day "give shelter to all the world and at the same time maintain its national character"[1] He transplanted the seedlings from the Maharshi's seed-bed of the Calcutta Somaj, into the open fields of the Brahmo Somaj of India. By the careful cultivation of the spirit of prayer and communion, by constant thirsting after God-vision and inspiration he enriched the soil of men's hearts, so long as he was permitted to be with us Thus the seedlings of the Maharshi grew up into vigorous growing plants, —under Keshub's care—and as the reward for the labour of these three great gardeners of God—whom we may with truth call the grandfather, the father, and the son—we have the Brahmo Somaj in the universal form in which it is struggling to realise and establish itself to-day. To each and all of them let us be always grateful. They are indeed "three in one, and one in three".

[1] Vide Keshub's "*Jatiya Vidhan*," Oct. 17, 1880, "*Sevaker Nivedana*

Their Mutual Relationship

The relation between Raja Rammohun born in 1774 and the Maharshi born in 1817—with a clear difference in age of 43 years—seems to us one full of an unfathomable mystery When the Raja left for England the Maharshi could not have been more than 11 or 12 years old It was another case of "I was young and Matthew seventy nine"—but here the "I" was not young but very, very young indeed,—too young to receive any tangible impression of the Raja's ideas and ideals, least of all his ideas and ideals about religion If the Maharshi's reminiscences of the Raja, said by his biographer Nagendranath Chatterjee to have been described by the Maharshi himself, may be relied upon, the Raja seems to have almost hyptonized the little lad .—

> "No other face so charmed me, I used to sit still as a doll before him merely drinking in influence from his face It is easy now to realise that there was a mysterious relation between me and the Raja..... He taught me nothing by words, for I was very young at the time When proceeding to England the Raja told my father that he could not leave the country before shaking hands with me The Raja lovingly pressed my hands the meaning of which I could only realise after I grew in years." [1]

What have we here but "soul to soul striking through a finer element of her own?"

It is equally difficult for us to imagine the degree of spiritual at-one-ment between the Maharshi and Keshub. The former addressed the latter in his letters in such terms as *Abhinna hridaya* (undivided in spirit), Prānādhik (dearer than life, etc) Mr. Ajit Kumar Chakravarti in his "Life of the Maharashi" says that one day

[1] They appear to be somewhat inconsistent with the Maharshi's own description in his Autobiography, possibly Nagendranath's description is a little overdone.

after the Divine Service Maharshi said to Keshub,—"Why did you not sit before me? The Service would have been deeper if I had seen you before me" That was in their early life. Again a few months before Keshub's ascension, the Maharshi in one of his letters to Keshub said:—"Such response to my words as I have all along received from you, I never could get from any one else," clearly showing that the splits in the Brahmo Somaj whether that of 1865 or that of 1878 were in no sense splits so far as Devendra and Keshub were personally concerned, and that they made *no difference whatever, in the Maharshi's estimation* of Keshub's mission Keshub, on his part, always looked upon the Maharshi as his spiritual father, and addressed his letters thus—*Pitri Charan Kamale*, etc. (to the lotus feet of my father) Nowhere in history was the Vedic text (*Atmabai Jayate putrah*) 'the father's spirit is reborn in the son,' so literally fulfilled between a spiritual father and his spiritual son, as it was between the Maharshi and his Brahmananda

But let us not be satisfied with mere general assertions In spite of their separation how deep was the Maharshi's appreciation of Keshub's work may be gathered from these editorial remarks in the *Tattwabodhini*, in 1870:—"By the opening of the Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Somaj a special purpose has been served, which in all probability could not have been easily served by the Adi Somaj. Indeed we ourselves felt much troubled about it We were unable to discover any simple method for the propagation of Brahmo Dharma among the masses." Little did the Maharshi foresee that a class of politicians would soon arise among Brahmos who by breaking away from Keshub would impede the real development of the Brahmo Somaj,—men who in their anxiety to anglicize our daily life, would have no time to think of bringing Brahmoism within reach of the masses, making it truly national—a point on which both Maharshi and

Brahmananda were at one in spirit.[1] Let not man divide whom God has united Considering the spiritual kindredness of these three of the noblest sons of India let us always gratefully acknowledge the Raja as the spiritual grandfather and the Maharshi as the spiritual father of the Brahmananda, the latter as representing the Brahmo Somaj

[1] It is most essential that "All the Brahmo Somajes that came to be established in India, should adorn themselves with Indian ideas and ideals Otherwise the soul of India will never become the soul of the Brahmo Somaj, and the weight of the Somaj will be like a halter round India's neck, and such saw flies will come to lodge in its centre that in course of time its inner pith and substance will become reduced to powder" Page 491—Ajit Kumar Chakravarti's Life of Maharshi Devendra Nath

CHAPTER II

CONSTITUTION IN THE BRAHMO SOMAJ

CONSTITUTION *Versus* DIVINE IDEA

Keshub was pre-eminently the Representative Man or the Great Man of the progressive Brahmo Somaj, or as Carlyle says, "the great man sent into the world with those thoughts that dwelt in him," of which our Brahmo Somaj is "the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment" But why need we to go to Carlyle, when our own Maharshi gives as equally clear a conception of "Great Men," for says he.

> 'God is drawing all souls to Himself As He has planted in every soul the seed of His idea, so does He also send here, now and then, Great (*Tejaswi*) Men to help in the development of that idea Those beloved sons of His, by the light of His own goodness, spread His love all the world over The seed of the *Divine Idea*, is innate in every soul, but it is by the example and precept of His beloved devotees that it develops ... By sending these good ones God draws to Himself thousands and thousands of people For the good of all God throws his beloved sons into various troubles, they on the other hand gladly bear their troubles and receive training thereby. How immeasurable is God's kindness to us, how immeasurable His Love!'' [1]
>
> "What is the character of the *sadhu* or good man (Great Man)? The delight they feel until they can share it with others cannot be satisfied They are not satisfied if they cannot share their food and drink with the poor As soon as they receive a new truth, their

[1] Maharshi D. N. Tagore's Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan No. 12

tongue would go out to preach it before all the world. They cannot be satisfied with enjoying the company of God alone They defy every obstacle thrown in the way of their shedding the delights of devotion on thousand other souls; the fear of the world does not, in the least, deter them, they are not afraid even to lay down their frail body Why is their goodness (*sadhubhava*) like this? Because the goodness of the good comes from God who is All-Good From this goodness turn your mind to the contemplation of the infinite goodness of God Is it not the object of His creation to spread the joy that He has in Himself, over all the world? Are not these creatures created for the manifestation of His Love" [1]

Thus the reader will see that the Maharshi looks upon Great Men as "Commissioned of God," as "the beloved sons of God," and not as Pundit Shastri, who regards Great Men merely as "Earth's delegates to Heaven" "in whom the collective prayers of a race find a representation and a vent," and who are but "the children of many little minds, pushed forward by the surging waves of national sentiment to be their leaders and mouthpieces" [2]

Next let us turn to Keshub himself, the Great Man of the progressive Brahmo Somaj. Keshub thus goes on to explain himself —

> "I have a higher self and a lower self You may hate my vices, but my higher self implanted in me by Divinity, working, speaking and moving in Him, and through Him you cannot resist My mission none can resist, for that is of God" [3]

Again Keshub is not one man, as he himself explains :—

[1] Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore's Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan No 14

[2] Pundit Shastri's "The New Dispensation and the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Madras, 1881, p 52

[3] "Am I an Inspired Prophet?" K. C. Sen's Lectures in India.

> "Yet it is not I that speak but we. Behind the visible "I" there is an invisible "We" It is my Church that speaks through me There are others who are working with me in God's vineyard Can I alone represent that Church? I am but a part of it Accept me then, as one among many" [1]

As Chairman of the Missionary Conference Keshub said on Magh 10, Saka 1801 (1879):— "Let us all preach with one and undivided heart. as being the different limbs of one body. The body is all in all"

It is interesting to note that both the Maharshi, and the Brahmananda compare the *Divine Idea* as revealed in the Brahmo Somaj with the development of a sprouting seed says the Maharshi :—

> "The seed-sprout of the Divine Idea is innate in all souls, but it is by the example and precept of the devout lovers of God that the seed sprout grows" [2]

Maharshi's idea of the seed-sprout we find further expanded in the *Dharmatattwa* —

> "All the ideas that were involved in the seed-state of the Brahmo Somaj, Keshub Chunder gave them a visible embodiment, as concrete realities In order that these concrete expressions may from day to day grow and convert the whole community into a model for the world, Keshub Chunder under Divine guidance made every necessary preparation" [3]

Keshub himself speaks thus of the development of the Brahmo Somaj from the *Brahma Sabha* of Rammohun, through the *Brahmo Mandali* or Congregation, of the Maharshi, to the New Dispensation revealed in his *Sevaker Nivedana, Jan. 21, 1881*

[1] "We Apostles of the New Dispensation" K. C Sen's Lectures in India
[2] Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan No 12
[3] Dharmatattwa—Sravan 16, Samvat 1962.

"Two saintly messengers of God, revealed, in due time, penetrating the dark atmosphere of Bengal, the path of true knowledge and the love of Brahma It is needless to mention their names which many know One laid the foundation of this Brahmo Somaj, and the other for many years fed and sustained this Brahmo Somaj .. One by dint of his learning cleared India of the jungle of errors of centuries, and the other by the manifestation of the love of Brahma, has called together men from different centres, and laid out with their help, on that cleared ground, the garden of a congregation of worshippers With the help of these two, the Hindu Somaj advanced as far as it could, while still remaining Hindu These two men by their own knowledge and love of Brahma, raised the Hindu Somaj to such a height of progress and purity, that at last the Hindu Somaj could not any longer remain a mere Hindu Somaj . .. The flag of Hinduism alone was flying in the sky, but now all of a sudden that flag goes down and up rises instead the flag Universal of the New Dispensation The Brahma of the Brahmo Somaj was so long the Brahma of Hindusthan, but now He becomes the Brahma of all the World"

Thus, to Keshub, the Brahmo Somaj is in reality the development of the Divine Idea from the time of the opening of the "place of public meeting," on Jan 23, 1830, to Jan 25, 1880, when the New Dispensation was proclaimed, during which period the doctrines and cardinal principles had been undergoing, as it were, fœtal development in the hearts and lives of these great leaders To attempt to arrest the growth of this life and ideal by so-called constitutional decrees was to fix the boundaries of God's revelation of Himself to us. Verily, to *pretend* to "conserve the best interests of the Somaj by organising it on a constitutional basis" while it was still quick with the sparks of Divine life, and growing in sanctity and beauty, is to seek to preserve the form while destroying the soul—indeed to kill that life and spirit, and kill the Brahmo Somaj itself

with it. Here as elsewhere "One with God is a majority." The position of Keshub Chunder with the inflatus of the Brahmo ideal was very much like that of Mahomed with the revelation of the Islamic ideal in him. Speaking of the use of the sword in the propagation of religion by Mahomed, Carlyle has remarked —

> "Much has been said of Mahomed's propagating his religion by the sword The sword indeed! Every new opinion, at its starting, is precisely *in a minority of one* In one man's head alone, there it dwells as yet One man alone of the whole world believes it; there is one man against all men That he take a sword and try to propagate with that, will do little for him You must first get your sword."

Let this be applied *mutatis mutandis* to our Brahmo ideal, as it came to be revealed to us through our triad of great men — in those early days,—Keshub Chunder as standing nearest to us, and *as having brought that ideal to maturity*, and therefore as, pre-eminently, the representative man of that ideal. Like the case of Mahomed, it was another case of one, or if you prefer, two or three men "against all men," only substitute the word "Votes of the Majority" for Carlyle's word "sword," and let it read—"that he (or those two or three men) be guided by "the votes of the majority," and try to propagate with that,—will do little for him. The idea is preposterous And yet that was exactly what we tried to do when we sought to throw him overboard and gag him by brandishing the sword of the votes of the majority, as the facts we are going to place before our readers will show.

So long as the Brahmo Somaj was confined to a handful of pioneers, the question of constitution was not seriously considered. In Raja Rammohun's time there was no room for raising the question, and nobody to raise it. When the Brahmo Somaj came into Devendranath's hands it was, for a time, something like a

patriarchal family with Devendranath as its head; and the constitution during that period might be called patriarchal But as the Somaj grew larger, Devendranath instead of exercising control would, as often as he could, leave it to the decision of the majority of the members. But it was only after the split of 1865 that the question of a constitution came into prominence; and in 1869, in trying to find a suitable constitution for the Brahmo Somaj, Keshub writes thus in the *Indian Mirror*, August 13, 1869:—

> "Above all there is one point which deserves the serious consideration of our friends—*viz*, the *Constitution of the Congregation* Should they determine upon creating a secular organisation, leaving the management of the Church in secular hands, they shall in our opinion commit the same blunder which the Trustees of the Calcutta Somaj committed and sow the seeds of schisms and disruptions Let not absolute authority be vested in any individual or secular committees, but let the direction of the affairs of the Church rest in the hands of the Congregation or the body of regular worshippers, who by their interest earnestness and mutual sympathy would be best fitted to do the work with the aid of their ministers We wish that nothing connected with the Brahma Mandir should be done in a worldly or secular manner, but that all its proceedings should bear a spiritual aspect"

As Brahmos there is one thing in which we all agree, and that is that a Brahmo whether he be an Adi-somajist, a Sadharani or a Navavidhani, will have, at least in theory, no despotism in the Somaj, whether that of an individual, or a body of individuals, not even what is called a "benevolent despotism" As the extract from the *Indian Mirror* of 1869 shows, our community is to rule itself To us Brahmos even a good external government is, in theory, not preferable to bad self-government. Perhaps there is another collateral point in which we all agree. In matters requiring special

knowledge or (*sadhana*) culture those who possess that knowledge should be invested by the community with authority (subject of course to its own control), in matters requiring for their proper solution such special knowledge or culture In other words we probably agree that experts in matters temporal should have authority in matters temporal, and experts in matters spiritual should have authority in matters spiritual In the Brahmo Somaj there are to be found at least two opposite classes of people.

(1) Those for whom social reform is primary and religion secondary, and (2) those to whom religion is primary and social reform secondary There may be a class which realises that the two are one, but its number is limited Both the classes have their experts, their leaders The problem before the Brahmo Somaj, and before every Brahmo should be, how to reconcile these irreconcilables? Keshub's solution is a bifurcation of authority, temporal and spiritual Keshub would have the temporal experts form the Executive Committee with full authority in all matters temporal, and the spiritual experts, the missionaries and ministers form a separate body such as the Missionary Conference or the *Sri Durbar*, with equally full authority in matters spiritual,—the two bodies being co-ordinate with each other, but both entirely subordinate to the community, or the General Meeting of the members

The Beginnings

Let us first see what light the Grandfather of the Brahmo Somaj throws on the problem of the constitution of the Brahmo Somaj Tracing back the growth of the Brahmo Somaj to its source, we find that in 1815, Raja Rammohun opened a society called the *Atmiya Sabha*, in his own garden house at Maniktola, where a few of his friends would meet him at a semi-

religious gathering A distinguished Vedantic scholar of Rammohun's day—Pundit Shivaprasad Misra, used to recite verses from the Vedas and other Hindu sacred books on the occasion, which closed with the singing of meditative and devotional hymns by one Govinda Mala But Rammohun's opponents headed by Raja Radha Kanta Dev, opened the *Dharma Sabha* to counteract the *Atmiya Sabha* and the reform movements of Rammohun Owing to their hostile attitude Rammohun's *Atmiya Sabha* ceased to exist after a short time After that Rammohun and his friends used to attend the Divine service conducted by Mr Adam, the Trinitarian parson who was converted to Unitarianism (who after his conversion was humorously called "the second fallen Adam") when he came into intimate contact with Rammohun The form of service followed by Mr Adam would, of course, be that which prevails in Unitarian Churches The place where the Divine Service was held was a room adjoining the office of the Journal, called the *Harkara* One day when Rammohun was returning home with his friends from the service, two of his friends Tarachand Chakravarti and Chandra Sekhar Dev, observed in the course of conversation, with some regret, that it was humiliating that in order to take part in the worship of God, they should be required to attend a place of worship belonging to foreigners "Why should we not have a thoroughly Indian meeting-place for worship, where our Vedas and other religious books may be read and explained and discourses given on (*paramartha-tattva*) the Absolute Reality?" This casual remark of two of his friends, struck the chord of patriotism in Rammohun's heart, and evoked a hearty support He made the proposal to some of the more influential among his friends, urging the necessity for establishing "a place of public meeting for worship and adoration at a hired house belonging to one Kamal Lochan Bose, on the Chitpore

Road, in Jorasanko" Every Saturday they met in the evening for worship The meeting would last from 7 P.M to 9 P.M., the Vedas and the Upanishads being first read, and then Ram Chandra Vidyavagish giving a discourse on some texts from the Vedas Devotional and meditative songs or hymns were then sung, after which the meeting broke up Babu Tarachand Chakravarti was the secretary to that meeting for public worship The worship at this place continued for about a year Here Rammohun never gave any special prominence to his own personality, either by being the secretary in matters temporal or by being the minister in matters spiritual but always tried to get things done by the members themselves,—in which one may see the germ of the democratic idea, or the ideal of the sovereignty of the people, in the Brahmo Somaj, which was kept up both by the Maharshi and most of all by Keshub Chunder,[1] as the following extract will show.

Then we find that on the 6th of June 1829, a plot of land with 'tenements' on it, is purchased by Srijukta Dwarkanath Thakur, and Srijukta Kalinath Roy and Sj Dewan Rammohun Roy for Rs 4200, at Jorasanko, then known as *Sutanati*, on the Chitpore Road On this plot of land they erected the present Somaj building, then known as Brahma Somaj or Sabha, and not Brahmo Somaj as now This building was first occupied

[1] Keshub lays bare his heart in regard to the Brahmo Community, when he says in his letter to Bhai Umanath Gupta, of Aug 2, 1883—'It is a mistake to think that I exist as a man apart from the community How can it, therefore, be possible for one to love and revere me as something apart from the community? The community and myself are one person The New Dispensation means everything taken together' Vide Upadhyaya Gour Govinda Roy's "Acharya Keshub Chandra," *Antya*, p 560

Such identification of self with the community, such self-effacement reminds one of the Vedantic ideal of *Moksha* as the realisation of *Sarvatmabhava*, or one's self realised in the selves of all. This ideal of self-effacement and of one self in all was the desire of Keshub to see realized in the Brahmo Somaj.

as a place of public meeting for worship and adoration,—or *Upasana Somaj*, on the 11th of Magh, *Saka* 1751, or the 23rd of January, 1830 The day of worship was then changed from Saturday to Wednesday. The *Trust Deed* of this *Brahmo* Somaj (executed by the purchasers above mentioned, to make over the property to a body of Trustees, authorising them to do all that may be required) is a most remarkable document, being, as it were, *the germ of the Brahmo Somaj* yet to be evolved more fully under the successors of Rammohun—the Maharshi and the Brahmananda. It tells us—

1. who are to be the worshippers, or to form the congregation for whose benefit the property is made over,
2. what God is to be their object of worship,
3. what is to be the form of worship, and lastly,
4. it gives us an invaluable light *as to what is to be the future constitution* of the Brahmo Somaj.

The most remarkable thing here is Rammohun's prophetic vision of *the character of the congregation* of the Brahmo Somaj yet to be evolved, for his congregation was to be a really universal one, "all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner." The building was to be a universal hall of worship, a Church Universal for all nations and races. Truly did the Maharshi speaking of Rammohun say that he "rose (like the sun) in our sky for the advancement of religion" not surely merely "pushed forward by the surging waves of national sentiment to be our leader and mouthpiece," as Pundit Shastri would speak of the advent of great men Where was the possibility in India of such a universal congregation in Rammohun's time? Nagendra Nath, the biographer of Rammohun seems to exaggerate

facts when he says—that "Englishmen too joined in the worship in those days." He even names one man, Montgomery Martin, as present on the opening day of the Somaj on the 11th Magh, or Jan. 23, 1830. But one swallow does not make a summer. No more does the presence of one Englishman, on a rare occasion, justify the general statement he makes. Considering the Hindu form of worship, the recitation of the Vedas and Upanishads, the Sudra being excluded from the room where the Vedas were read (for no other form of worship,—national yet universal,—was possible in those days),—it would appear that of non-Hindus like Christians, Mahomedans, Jews or Parsis (rare visitors of the Brahmo Somaj even to-day),—at all attended in those days they would do so on very rare occasions, and perhaps not so much to join in the worship as out of curiosity for a thing novel and heterodox. To Rammohun's mind a congregation of "all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction, of men of all religious persuasions and creeds," could only have been *a prophetic vision of what was to come*, not the result of calculation or generalization from actual facts or from given data That prophetic vision only foreshadowed the New Dispensation proclaimed by Keshub in 1880, of the harmony of all scriptures and saints and sects, Keshub being thus the fulfilment of Rammohun And it was for such a congregation yet to be born that the executors of the Trust Deed stood as the representatives

What again is *the nature of the Being* for whose worship and adoration it was possible for such a mixed and universal congregation to assemble together? "The Eternal, Unsearchable, and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe,"—this way of referring to God, merely by negatives seems to be in the style of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad,—"*that Self is not* this, not that," etc Indeed comparing with the

revelation of Divine attributes received in the Brahmo Somaj, through the Maharshi and Keshub in later times, the revelation to Rammohun seems to be the mere germ, though it seems likely that the idea was suggested by the words of *Sura Ikhlas* of the Koran —"God is one, God is Indescribable there is nothing to which God can be likened." Here again the reader will see that the Maharshi and Keshub with their specification of Divine attributes—Satyam, Jnanam, etc , are the fulfilment of Rammohun

What was to be *the form of worship* to be adopted for that universal church with a mixed congregation? God is to be worshipped and adored "not under or by any other name, designation, or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatever, and that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of anything, shall be admitted within the said messuage, building and tenements etc , that no sacrifice, offering or oblation of any kind, or thing, shall ever be permitted therein; that no animal shall within the said premises be deprived of life; and that no eating or drinking, feasting or rioting be permitted therein, and that in conducting the said worship and adoration no object that has been recognised as an object of worship by any man shall be reviled or contemptuously spoken of, in preaching, praying, or in the hymns, or other mode of worship, but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds" The trustees are also to see that such worship is to be performed daily, or at least as often as once in seven days. Lastly, who is to be responsible to see that the worship is performed in the way as is "hereinbefore

stated and expressed ?' The resident superintendent, "a person of good repute and well-known for his knowledge, piety and morality, be employed by the said trustees as a resident superintendent, and for the purpose of superintending the worship, etc.."

Here we have the germ of the Brahmo Somaj of to-day, the germ which sprouted and grew through the two succeeding leaders, culminating in the New Dispensation in 1880, exactly half a century after Rammohun Roy founded his *Brahma Sabha* or Somaj Considering the time of the advent of Rammohun, the ideal of the universal church as revealed in him could only be more or less a subjective ideal, to be objectively realised and given a concrete form in Keshub's church of the New Dispensation, "the church of Universal Brotherhood which tolerates not the least sectarianism" All that was possible for Rammohun in his day, all that he could do for the realisation of this ideal, was to put the new wine of his universalism into the old bottle of the Vedanta or to give the start to his universalism by casting it into a national mould, into the apparently national but really both universal and national mould of our Upanishads In such a state of affairs imperfections in the form of worship were inevitable Pundit Gour Govinda thus describes Rammohun's form of worship —

> "On the day of meeting a little before sunset, in a small room of that house (of worship) the Vedas used to be read Brahmins alone were allowed to enter there After that was done Sj Achyutananda Bhattacharya explained the Upanishads in the large hall of that house, where immediately after Sj Ramchandra Vidyavagish explained the commentaries of the Vedanta Sutra, sometimes reading out discourses of his own composition in elucidation of the Vedantic text After that hymns about Brahma were sung, and then the meeting dispersed."—(G. G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Adi*, p 14.)

This then was the humble nucleus of Divine Service out of which, through the medium of Rammohun's successors, the elaborate Divine Service of the present day, with its parts well defined—(1) Invocation (Udbodhun), (2) Adoration (Aradhana), (3) Contemplation (Dhyana), (4) Congregational prayer (for universal humanity), (5) Sermon (Upadesha), (6) Prayer (Prarthana), and (7) Benediction (Shantivachana)—has been revealed. Here, too, the reader will see that the Maharshi and the Brahmananda were the fulfilment of Rammohun. It may also be noted here that as regards their private devotions, both Rammohun and Devendranath, as born of Brahmin parents, made use of the Brahminical Gayatri Rammohun wrote a small pamphlet to prove that worship is best performed by means of the Gayatri " In this respect the Maharshi seems to have followed in the footsteps of the Raja, with this difference that though the Maharshi found it very beneficial for himself, he would not inculcate it for Brahmos as a class. It was really Keshub Chunder Sen who completely delivered the Brahmo Somaj from the thraldom of the Gayatri

Bifurcation of Duty and Authority

What every man desires is a healthy mind in a healthy body There are diseases of the mind as there are diseases of the body, and it is natural that every man should wish to be free from both kinds of diseases As there are diseases of both kinds, so there are physicians of both kinds, of the body or doctors, as well as of the mind or divines, and as a rule the physicians of the mind or the divines are different persons from physicians of the body This is true for man individually or in the *vyasti* as the Vedanta would say It is equally true for man collectively or in the *Samashti*. A community like our Brahmo community or

Somaj is but a collection of individual persons, and the ideal of the "healthy mind in a healthy body" is as true for our community, as for us individually Thus the need for physicians of the Somaj body, as a class as well as the need for the divines as a class for the Somaj mind, is as urgent as it is for us individually Thus in the normal state of health of a community, we should expect a *bifurcation of duty as well as of authority into temporal as well as spiritual*, or a division of the leaders into experts of the world or business men, and experts of the spirit or divines, or the right men in the right place for the healthy growth of our Brahmo community

What concerns us most intimately, however, in Rammohun's Trust Deed, and in the arrangement he made regarding the maintenance, in health and strength of his new-born baby of the Brahmo Somaj, when he left India for good in 1830,—the very year of the foundation of the Somaj,—is the bifurcation of duty as well as authority into temporal or secular, and spiritual or sacred It was foreshadowed *theoretically* in the Trust Deed, and *practically* by Rammohun's placing one of his own colleagues and co-adjutors as executor of the Trust Deed, and his well-tried and faithful friend, Ramchandra Vidyavagish, *in independent charge* of the purely spiritual interests of the Somaj To look after the secular interests of that embryonic Somaj the five executors of the Trust, (guided without doubt by the ideas and ideals of Rammohun and representing as it were the future congregation of the Somaj), appointed three experts in matters secular as Trustees That the congregation should rule itself was the idea of Rammohun was clearly demonstrated in 1856 when we read[1] that Prosonna Kumar Tagore, one of the executors of the Trust, called a general Meeting of the Brahmo Somaj,

[1] Maharshi's *Atmajwan*—p. 137.

and on the unanimous opinion of that meeting, appointed Devendranath and Ramaprosad to fill the two vacant places out of the three of those of the Trustees, himself acting merely as the representative of the congregation. This idea of the Congregation governing itself by the votes of the majority was, as we have seen, the fundamental principle of the Brahmo Somaj of India, so that in the matter of the constitution of the Somaj Keshub was truly the fulfilment of Rammohun In this Trust Deed, Rammohun also furnishes a singular example of self-effacement, for though he was the soul, and bore the bulk of the expense, his name stands last in the deed of Trust "Dwarka Nath Tagore of Jorasanko, Kalinath Roy of Baranagore, Prosonna Kumar Tagore of Pathuriaghata, Ram Chandra Vidyavagish of Simla (Calcutta), and Rammohun Roy of Manicktala appoint three Trustees Boikuntha Nath Roy, Radhaprosad Roy, and Ramanath Tagore, their heirs and assigns who shall and do from time to time, and at all times for ever hereafter permit and suffer the said building to be used, occupied, enjoyed, applied and appropriated as and for a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people" In the executors of the Trust Deed now standing before us as the embryo of a Brahmo congregation yet to come, Rammohun entirely merged his personal self; and his self-effacement in the community we find further developed in the Maharshi, and most of all in Keshub's New Dispensation [1]

The other duties entrusted to the care of the Trustees are :—that no feasting or sacrificing of animals shall take place on the Somaj premises, that no object recognised as an object of worship by any one, shall be reviled or contemptuously spoken of in the course of

[1] Says Keshub—"If one of us go to preach in Madras why should not we think that we go there ourselves? Each one must realise 'I go myself' I am he, he is me Such faith is indispensable" *Sri Darbarer Nirdharan*, p 96

the worship; that the sermons, discourses, prayers and hymns shall be such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of God, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, and "the strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions" No one indeed could expect "the strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions" from the discourses of the Vidyavagish Rammohun seems here in his prophetic vision to have realised by anticipation, half a century before it actually came into the world, Keshub's New Dispensation The ideal of Brahmoism as the Universal religion was also present in the Maharshi's mind as early as 1861 when he says —

> "As the sun, the light of this earth, rising in the East first afterwards illumines the whole world, so also has this Brahmoism risen first in the Orient,—our Bengal Now it will gradually illuminate the whole earth . . Fill your heart with this Brahmo Dharma which is to be the religion of the whole earth, which is to be the religion of this limitless universe By our good examples it will gradually spread over the whole world" [1]

Did Devendranath too in his prophetic vision see in 1861 that his Keshub would carry the torch of Brahmoism to England in 1870, that his Protap would carry it to America in 1883, and that his own son Robindranath would carry the torch to Japan and America in 1912 and 1917? As for bringing Brahmoism nearer to "men of all religious persuasions" [2] it was

[1] Maharshi's Vyakhyan,—Part I, No Twenty-third, p 135

[2] Pundit Dayanand Saraswati (1875-1883) held before the Arya Somaj his Vedic religion as the Universal Religion Dr Platt says —"The Arya Somaj would like to see not only all India, but all the world within its fold The Brahmo Somaj is too universal, and also too Christian to please the average Hindu It is on this ground specially that Dayanand attacked it" Dayanand prescribed the *Agnihotra* (Fire offering) as a "sacrifice to all nature, that ancient Vedic rite

Keshub who did a great deal more towards it than any of his predecessors, by openly divesting Brahmoism of its original Hindu exclusiveness.

Do our leaders mean that our Brahmoism should be the religion of the world? Then it is well worth considering what message we, if we deserve to be called Brahmos, have to deliver to the world to-day. *Is it our much-vaunted bureaucratic type of constitutionalism, which we propose to carry to democratic Europe and America? Or is it our much-vaunted "Philosophy of Brahmoism," —the mere chewing of the cud of a Shankara, or a Kant and others?* Have we anything better to do than to carry coal to Newcastle? Europe badly needs the Maharshi's and the Brahmananda's gospel of universal God-vision, universal inspiration and universal brotherhood! But alas those who should be the evangelists of that gospel are trifling away their time in casting slur upon their own prophets!

Let us consider more in detail *the model of a constitution* for the Brahmo Somaj, foreshadowed in Rammohun's Trust Deed We have shown that a nucleus of a constitution best suited in Rammohun's opinion, to secure the healthy growth of the Somaj to be the centre of all authority, whether secular or spiritual, lay in that embryonic congregation of five, who executed the Trust, who in the absence of a regularly attending larger body, for whose benefit the Trust property is intended, stand by anticipation as it were, for that larger congregation which may truly be said to have first come into existence in 1843, when on (*Pous* 7) *i.e.*, about December 21, a band of young men, headed by Devendranath took the Brahmo vow before Ram Chandra Vidyavagish. The Vidyavagish,—how very

being deliberately adopted into a new and rationalistic religion in part for the sake of the psychological and social effect on the participants. It emphasises their connection with Vedic times." Pratt's—"India and its Faiths," p 209.

genuine was his love for the Brahmo Somaj!—when they were taking the vow, burst into tears and said:—"This indeed was Rammohun's desire, but alas! he did not live to see his desire realised! It is right and proper, we said, *to interpret the Trust Deed in the light of subsequent events.* We see Prosonna Kumar Tagore, one of the leading executors of the Trust, before appointing Devendranath as a Trustee in 1856, calls a "General Meeting of the Congregation of the Brahmo Somaj of those days, takes their opinion as his sole guide, and makes the appointment only after he had obtained the unanimous approval of the Congregation, as if he looked upon himself merely as a centralized instrument of that Congregation [1] But the democratic principle as underlying Rammohun's conception of the Brahmo Somaj, may be said to have taken shape in 1841, about 15 years before Prosonna Kumar Tagore called the General Meeting of the Congregation, when on behalf of the *Tattwabodhini Sabha* Devendranath undertook to look after the Brahmo Somaj,—for the *Tattwabodhini Sabha* of Devendranath and his band, had a fully developed democratic constitution, says the biographer of Devendranath:

> "That the *Tattwabodhini Sabha* had a well-organised constitution on the popular basis will appear on a perusal of its rules and regulations Devendranath was not even then (*i e*, in 1847 when he published the translation of the Rig Veda) either its President or its Secretary He was a mere member Devendranath's writings too could only be published in the *Tattwabodhini* after they had been examined and approved by the Publication Committee of which too Devendranath was a a mere member." [2]

Again, think of Akshaya Kumar's *Atmiya Sabha* of 1856. How ultra-democratic it was to have compelled

[1] Maharshi's *Atmajwani*, p. 137
[2] Maharshi Devendranath, Ajit K. Chakravarti, p 188.

Devendranath to beat a hasty retreat to the hills of Simla by the mere meddlesome show of hands.

When Rammohun left India for good, in the very year of the birth of the Brahmo Somaj, he entrusted it to the care of his friends and admirers as trustees, all of them men of wealth, position and culture They might indeed do a great deal for the Somaj, but did they? Did they do anything worth mentioning, to save the life of Rammohun's infant Brahmo Somaj? Far from it. As soon as Rammohun had left our shores, the trustees, one after another, turned their backs on it, leaving the Somaj to its fate. Says Pundit Gour Govinda Roy.—

> "From 1830 to 1841 (that is, for the 12 years—from the day that Rammohun sailed for England to the day Devendranath began to take an active interest in the Brahmo Somaj) the condition of the Brahmo Somaj did not seem to the public by any means hopeful From the moment the Raja sailed for England in 1830, Nov. 15, the ardour of his followers cooled down. When the Raja had left for England, the responsibilty of maintaining the Somaj naturally fell on his son Radhaprosad Roy (one of the trustees) But Radhaprosad's private duties regarding his property, made him stay away from Calcutta, so that the friends of the Raja had to come forward to maintain his institution. One by one, however, the friends, too, slipped away"

What did really save the Brahmo Somaj in that crisis when it was still in the cradle? It was the constitution that Rammohun, under Divine guidance, gave to it. The bifurcation of duty as well as authority into spiritual and temporal, saved the Brahmo Somaj in the worst possible crisis of its life. What saved the Brahmo Somaj? The exertions of that poor but pious and faithful steward of God's house, Srimat Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, who with the doles of charity of the benevolent Dwarkanath, kept up in his quiet, unostentatious way, the fire divine entrusted to his

care, like an ideal *agnihotri*, for 11 or 12 years, till the Lord relieved him of his sacred charge, and in His own time, called in Devendranath.

Leadership, Temporal and Spiritual

What a lesson have we here! Rammohun the true builder of God's house, was a man well-grounded in the Vedantic (*adhicari vichara*) considerations of competency He selected the trustees from among men of the world, highly cultured men of light and leading and vested them with every necessary authority, in all secular matters, to settle all preliminary affairs, before effect could be given to the primary object of that miniature congregation, conferring on them even the right of appointing the "resident superintendent." On the contrary he would have the superintendent vested with sole authority in matters spiritual, insisting that he should be a person of good repute, and well-known for his knowledge, piety and morality. Rammohun was careful to forestall any meddlesomeness on the part of the secular authorities, the trustees, in regard to any of the details of worship, or in any matter purely spiritual, either in the doctrines or in the liturgy. Rammohun Roy, at once a thorough man of the world and a divine, with his usual foresight made "assurance doubly sure," by himself appointing his trusted friend and colleague, and one of the executors of the Trust, Rama Chandra Vidyavagish as Minister and Superintendent. Who do you think, in Rammohun's Brahmo Somaj would have decided those purely spiritual questions which would naturally crop up in the life of a growing congregation? Evidently on the basis of the Trust Deed itself, the only man competent to decide such purely spiritual questions, would be Ram Ch Vidyavagish,—subject of course, to revision at the General Meeting of the congregation To guard against

the fatal error of merging all kinds of authority—secular and sacred—in the hands of a practically irresponsible body such as the congregation in that nebulous state of the Somaj was likely to be, Rammohun insisted on a bifurcation of duty and authority, placing in each sphere the best men available, and leaving no loophole for any interference beyond the limits laid down in his Trust Deed The best men available in consideration of their wealth, tactfulness, culture and general intelligence,—Radhaprosad Roy, Baikunthanath Roy and Radhanath Tagore, were placed in sole charge of the secular affairs of the Somaj, and the best man available in consideration of his piety, morality and Vedantic scholarship, was placed in sole charge of the purely spiritual interests of the Somaj. Indeed Rammohun himself helped to give Ram Chandra a special training in the Vedanta by placing him for training under Shivaprosad Misra, his old Pundit of the Atmiya Sabha of 1815 Ram Chandra had also acquired some experience in Vedantic preaching by his giving of discourses on Vedas and Vedantas, at the Upasana Somaj of Rammohun and his friends, held at Kamal Bose's house at Jorasanko, in 1828 It was indeed quite providential that such a bifurcation of duty and authority was both theoretically and practically enforced.

Speaking of Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, Devendranath's biographer says.—"In 1830, when the Brahmo Somaj was founded, he was appointed its Superintendent."[1] It was this arrangement—and not those gilded ornamental figureheads—appointed Trustees, that saved Rammohun's Brahmo Somaj from death. Of course under the provisions of the Trust Deed, the Trustees were vested with the right to appoint a Superintendent in case of need, and the right to appoint of course carried with it the right to suspend or dismiss But so

[1] Maharshi Devendranath, Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, p. 68.

long as the Superintendent was retained in his office he was free, within the limits of the Trust, and responsible to God and his own conscience, in the discharge of his spiritual duties. Again, worship being the primary object of this Somaj, social reform or anything else of that kind come within its scope only as the necessary corollaries of true spiritual worship. The predominant personality in the Somaj is therefore the spiritual head—or Superintendent and Minister,—the temporal heads, the Trustees having a very subordinate place in the Somaj. In any Brahmo Somaj which professes to look upon Rammohun as the leader, the predominant element should be spiritual, *i e*, the Ministers—and not that miscellaneous combination known as the Executive Committee. To make the Ministers act under the orders of such an Executive Committee, in matters spiritual would be shocking to Rammohun himself. For a secular body of trustees or any Executive Committee to direct the Minister in matters spiritual would turn out a secular body of social reformers who might use worship as a means to an end. It was this that Devendranath feared when he spoke of "those whose end or aim is the world; but who make (Brahma) God their means."[1]

Who is a Brahmo? Who has the best right to answer? Devendranath, who first formulated our fundamental principles, as they were revealed to him, and who first organized the Brahmo Somaj in the sense of a community, has the best right to answer the question 'Who is a Brahmo?' or 'What is Brahmoism?' Devendranath's answer is:—"He is a Brahmo whose aim is Brahma (God). As the world is the aim of the worldly man, so is Brahma the aim of the Brahmos How different are the aims of the two: of the worldly man and of the Brahmo, as different as darkness and

[1] Maharshi's Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan, Part II, No. 10, p. 61.

light "[1] What is Brahmoism, or the Brahmo Somaj? It was Devendranath who first founded the nucleus of the Brahmo Somaj on the basis of the fundamental truths revealed to him, so that of all men here also, he has the best right to answer the question. Says he :—

> "Brahmoism is a spiritual religion—a religion of the soul Just as we every day wash our faces, bathe and take exercise, for the sake of health and the purification of our bodies, so let us every day wash in the nectar of Divine Grace, the stains of our sin and impurity."[2]

The Brahmo Somaj, then, is pre-eminently a spiritual body. To place the management of such a Somaj entirely in the hands of a secular body of a miscellaneous character, and use worship as a means to an end is as foolish as "placing the cart before the horse." Such a Somaj should not be called a Brahmo Somaj in the accepted sense, all our hypocritical public professions of admiration for Rammohun Roy notwithstanding.

Keshub Chunder always realised the absurdity of placing a spiritual society like the Brahmo Somaj in the hands of a secular body And we all know what happened when the Adi Somaj proceeded to decide by a show of hands whether God was merciful. Keshub writing in 1869, as if in a prophetic vision of what would come, observed :—

> "Should they (the congregation) determine upon creating a secular organization, and leaving the management of the Church in secular hands, they shall, in our opinion, commit the same blunder which the Trustees of the Calcutta Somaj committed, and sow the seeds of schisms and disruptions "[3]

Rammohun Roy's Brahmo Somaj was kept up by the worshippers, with the help of their Minister, Ram

[1] Maharshi's Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan Part II, No. 10, p 60.
[2] Maharshi's Mashik Upadesh No. 3, p. 6.
[3] *Indian Mirror*, Aug. 13, 1869.

Chandra Vidyavagish Keshub improved upon the seed-idea of Rammohun, suggesting —

> "Let not absolute authority be vested in any individual *or secular committee*, but let the direction of the affairs of the Church rest in the hands of the congregation, or the body of regular worshippers, who, by their interest, earnestness, and mutual sympathy would be best fitted to do the work with the aid of their ministers "[1]

Keshub improved upon the ideas of Rammohun by substituting a synod of ministers for that one single man, Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, to give 'aid' to the congregation in the direction of their own affairs This synod of the ministers of the congregation, is what Mozoomdar calls, "an apostolic body who would be elders and teachers, the "*Pracharak Sabha*" or the much-maligned "*Sri Durbar*" Keshub further improved this synod of ministers by introducing in it *a new safeguard against personal error, by insisting upon unanimity in all its decisions whenever practicable* instead of the usual rule of the votes of the majority. This synod coming to any decision (and its decisions were only confined to matters purely spiritual) must be unanimous, and to effect unanimity they would constantly seek for the Divine light until the same truth was revealed to all, the whole body of ministers being thus *required to act as one man, or not to act at all.* It is easy to realise that for a body of men, one and all liable to errors, determined to be guided by Divine Inspiration in all spiritual matters, connected with the Church, unanimity is the only possible objective test of freedom from error of that inspiration coming from the One True God, thus reducing the personal equation, so that each may not think that what he himself realises is the one that comes from God Keshub Chunder said in the Sri Durbar on (Sravan 4, Saka 1797) July 1875 :—

[1] *Indian Mirror*, Aug. 13, 1869.

"An order coming from the author of the Dispensation should be the same in substance on any particular occasion, to all who are the members of that Dispensation It should not be different in different individuals. If it should be different in different individuals, it may be presumed as erroneous"

Unanimity being thus secured by earnest prayer and seeking after the Divine Light, the whole synod would act as one man, as one Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, and yet be free from the errors of an individual Ram Chandra in all matters affecting the purely spiritual interests of the Somaj

Ministers And Their Maintenance

Another interesting point on which the Trust Deed of Rammohun Roy throws invaluable light, is about the employment of *salaried servants in the propagation of our Brahmo faith.* Up to the time of the creation of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj in 1878, the ministers of the Brahmo Somaj were *free* and either lived entirely on their own means or on the free gifts of reverence of the public. It is well known that in the Adi Somaj, when the Maharshi offered to bear the expenses of the Goswami's family, Bijoy Krishna took serious offence In those early days the ministers of the Somaj were more or less of the type of St. Paul, who might justly say in Paul's words "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more" (I Cor. 1-19). The marvellous progress of the Somaj, and the numerous accessions of earnest and devout souls is proof unmistakable that our people responded to their call with all their heart, soul and mind As regards the employment of salaried ministers, whom St. Paul describes as "the hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, who seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep,"—it is

a great mistake for us to follow the lead of the present-day Christian missions. The analogy should rather be with the Christian propaganda of the apostolic days, of the days of Peter and Paul. Where should Christianity have been to-day if Peter and Paul were the salaried servants of the church to act under the directions of an Executive Committee who could appoint, or suspend or dismiss them at their own sweet will ?

In the Trust Deed Rammohun and his coadjutors direct that "a person of good repute and well-known for his knowledge, piety and morality be employed by the Trustees as a Resident Superintendent,"—but there is nowhere anything to show that the post of Superintendent was to carry any salary, or any regular allowance. There is nothing to indicate that Vidyavagish's labour, was not to be a labour of love, that the post was not honorary. Indeed it does not appear that Rammohun's Brahmo Somaj had any fixed income whatever,—all its income was probably in the form of fluctuating donations. That income too came to an end after Rammohun was gone,—except what came from Prince Dwarkanath Tagore At any rate, so far as the three Trustees were concerned, Ram Chandra received no salary from them, and, therefore, did not stand to them in the relation of master and servant In the discharge of his duties he had no reason to think of pleasing any man ; he was free in matters spiritual to follow his inner light. What, again, was his relation to Prince Dwarkanath, on whose doles of charity, the Brahmo Somaj had to depend for its existence ? Not very friendly, to say the least. Devendranath says that not only did his father, Dwarkanath, disapprove of Devendra's taking a deep interest in the Brahmo Somaj, but that he would strongly censure the good and straightforward Ram Chandra, whenever he met him, on a charge of "corrupting his young son's mind." It at least shows that neither of them considered that anything like a relation

of master and servant subsisted between Dwarkanath and Ramchandra

The contributions of Dwarkanath to the Somaj funds were undoubtedly in the Hindu spirit (and they were both Hindus)—of *dakshina, of sraddhaya deyam*, according to the custom of making free gifts to the Brahmin Pundit as such, more or less as a mark of reverence From what Nagendra N. Chatterji says in this connection we are also led to presume that the contributions to the Superintendent and Minister, Ram Chandra, who was himself a distinguished Vedantic Pundit of his day, were in the Hindu spirit of gift of reverence. Says Nagendra Nath—"On the anniversary day, the 11th Magh, the leaders of the Brahmo Somaj, Dwarkanath Tagore and other Tagore Zemindars, Kalinath Roy, the Taki Zemindar, and Annada Prosad Roy, the Telinipara Zemindar, by the presentation of money showed special honour to the Brahmin Pundits who attended the Somaj."[1] Indeed these free gifts in a sacred cause, like that of the Hindu Somaj, might bear comparison with the endowments of the English Churches, where the Minister has no reason to feel under a personal obligation to any man or body of men, for the food and raiment of himself and his family. Both under the Hindu system of *dakshina*, and the English system of Church endowments the receiver has no reason to think of pleasing his benefactors in the discharge of the duties of his office, has no reason to have a feeling of personal indebtedness,—such as, we are told in the *Mahabharata*, blunted the moral sense of no less a personage, than the great Bhishma himself. For such personal indebtedness involves the spirit of barter, carrying all the nauseating odour of worldly motives in matters spiritual

In a growing Church like our Brahmo Somaj, whose

[1] Mahatma Rammohun Roy by Nagendra Nath Chatterji, p 317

very doctrines are being gradually evolved, shaped and formulated, it is of the utmost importance that the Ministers should not feel as under a personal obligation to any secular organization for their or their children's food and raiment, so that they may fear none but look up to God alone in the discharge of their duty,—and be no "respector of persons" In the case of old stereotyped religious bodies, with fixed creeds like the Athanasian, the mischief that salaried ministers can cause, is comparatively insignificant. To the Brahmo Somaj, however, *it is, as we see, a question of life and death* I need hardly point out here that in regard to the maintenance of the independence of the Ministers also, Rammohun's ideal finds its fulfilment in Keshub Chunder Sen.

Missionaries—"Called" or "Voted?"

Whenever we think of any constitution, in connection with our Brahmo Somaj or any religious body, we are generally guilty of a confusion of thought. The Brahmo Somaj is a religious and not a political body. Should its constitution be modelled after the *democratic* type as in politics or take some other form is a question which deserves our consideration The democratic principle of representation as we find it in force in European and American politics, refers only to matters secular and is based, as we all know, on the principle of "no representation, no taxation," or, as it is vulgarly expressed, "He who pays the piper calls for the tune." It is barter, and calculation of gain and loss, of rights to be claimed for the duties to be discharged. Such a spirit of barter, and calculation of loss and gain has absolutely no place in religion or matters spiritual The politician claims that all men are free, and equally free, and that, inasmuch as they have common interest in the state, they are brothers. Their much-vaunted "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" practically means no more than this. But religion, on the other

hand, aims at a great deal more than mere matters secular. The principle of barter or of contract, is therefore almost out of place, where matters spiritual are concerned Religion and the church seek to develop those qualities of our human nature, of which politics takes no notice; for example, disinterested love, self-sacrifice, self-effacement, humility, gratitude, faith, divine inspiration, purity, trust in each other, etc.

The form of Church Government, so far as matters spiritual are concerned, that the Brahmo Somaj should adopt, cannot therefore be based on that spirit of barter, which is a necessary corollary of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" as *understood in politics* It should be based on that of disinterested love and self-effacement, divine inspiration and voice of conscience, which are a necessary corollary of our doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. In other words the Brahmo Somaj is to serve disinterestedly, obeying God and claiming nothing in return The principle of Church Government for the Brahmo Somaj was thus outlined by Keshub in 1865 —

> "The missionaries are working out of pure love of religion, taking no thought of their worldly interests, let us not fill their minds with worldly ideas, nor bind them with the fetters of subjection Let them preach Brahmoism, taking no thought of their life, and let us also undertake to look after their families as a duty of great responsibility, but it would be wrong to fix their salary, and bind them with worldly fetters The word 'salary' should be excluded altogether from the vocabulary of Brahmo Mission Work." [1]

On the other hand introduce the political spirit of barter, of rights to be claimed for the duties discharged in matters spiritual, in the constitution of the Brahmo Somaj, and you will soon enthrone Mammon, if it has not been done already, on the throne of the Most High,

[1] Acharya Keshub Chandra, G G. Roy, *Madhya*, p. 39.

and sap the very foundation of our Church killing the spirit of piety and righteousness altogether Thus the reader will see the folly of saddling the Brahmo Somaj, so far as its spiritual life is concerned, with a constitution in close imitation of what Mr A. M. Bose and others did in the case of the Indian Association.

Let the reader only think of those men, those ministers of the Church, who composed Keshub's band in those early days whose very name would be a guarantee of the righteousness of the cause they espoused We know of no constitutional machinery that could have produced for the Brahmo Somaj men like the following. —Take one of the oldest of Keshub's comrades—Bhai Umanath Gupta For a small offence under the Municipal Act, he is fined a small sum by a Court. He has money in his pocket to pay that fine many times over, but he does not pay, and is sent to jail. There he finds several others in the same predicament as himself,—sent to jail like himself for the non-payment of small fines under the Municipal Act. Umanath pays their fines for them and they are released. They all join with Umanath in a *Sankirtan*, or chanting the glory of God. The officer-in-charge asks Umanath Babu why he does not pay his own fine, and receives the strange reply, that the money belongs to the charity section of the Brahmo Somaj He cannot use it for himself. What a noble reply to give! And yet how unlike other men, he! In these days one would have thought that 'Charity begins at home,' and would not go to split hair on a point of principle in a matter so trifling.

Take another of Keshub's band,—Sadhu Aughore Nath Aughore Nath in one of his preaching tours has to pass through a wilderness infested by robbers. The robbers attack him on his way. To ordinary people 'discretion is the better part of valour,' and an ordinary salaried preacher would not undertake if he could help, such a tour at the risk of his life. But Sadhu Aughore

Nath was not a preacher of that type. He goes and is set upon by the robbers He does not resist, does not run away, does not bawl aloud for help as we should have done. He sits down to pray, ejaculates a prayer, sings a hymn, and becomes absorbed in yoga, and is lost in beatitude. The robbers observe him, become deeply impressed by his faith and devotion, his *bhakti*, stand quite charmed for a while, and knowing him to be a true sadhu or man of God, leave him quite unmolested

Take again the case of Pundit Bijoy Krishna Goswami who was naturally very impulsive, and not given to cool reasoning or to making any inquiry. Of him it may truly be said that though his judgment sometimes erred, specially when he came under the influence of crafty wire-pullers, for he was almost credulous, his heart was always sound He goes as a pastor to Baganchra, a village of Jessore; there he happens to talk with his flock about caste, and the sacred thread as a badge of caste One of his flock Babu Prannath Mullick raises the question that if it was a sign of hypocrisy and moral cowardice to bear on one's person the sacred thread, how did Vedantavagish and Becharam Babu, the ministers of the Calcutta Somaj of those days, bear the sacred thread, on their persons, while they were allowed to perform the duties of the minister of the Brahmo Somaj. The very question as it were roused his sleeping conscience. The chord of noble enthusiasm in the service of truth and righteousness was struck and it gave thrilling response. At once and without any calculation as to the cost, or anticipation as to what the opinion of the majority might be the Goswami came to a solemn decision, which was· "Such hypocrisy and moral cowardice should have no place in the Brahmo Somaj. I will not keep any connection with a Brahmo Somaj that tolerates it." Let the votaries of the opinion of the majority

reflect. The Goswami was at that moment in a minority of one. It was a tug of war between one man and the whole Brahmo world, in which that one man triumphs, while the majority dogma goes to limbo Only imagine what would have happened in that contest if that one man had been vanquished, and the opinion of the majority triumphed! How different was he from the class of salaried pastors who from considerations of expediency would seldom even dream of saying or doing or supporting with their sympathy, anything however right and proper, if it is likely to displease in the least, those who supply their sinews of war.

Passing from the ministers of those days who were Keshub's immediate followers let us take the case of a layman like Mr. Durga Mohan Das of Barisal who was intimately connected with Keshub's band of the faithful Mr. S. R Das at the anniversary of his father's death, in 1917, told us that Mr. Durga Mohan Das, after a careful study of Christianity and Christian manners and customs while still in the Hindu Somaj, at Barisal, as a pleader, in the sixties, felt a strong inclination to be baptized as a Christian That was also about the time when Keshub Chunder Sen was making his mark in the world, in open controversies with those stalwart champions of Christianity, the Rev Dyson of the C M.S , and our own Rev. Lal Bihari De, headed by the great Dr. Duff of the Scottish Mission [1] Naturally this news must have created a deep impression on Mr Durga Mohan's mind, and evoked his admiration for Keshub. The latter was the main instrument in bringing about the change, and stopping that tide in favour of Christianity, then in full swing, among Hindus, and which was on the point of carrying him away from his kindred. Again,

[1] Mr Mozoomdar says that at last about 1863 Dr Duff had himself openly to confess "with his characteristic frankness," that "the Brahmo Somaj was a power in the realm"—Mozoomdar's Life and Teachings of Keshub Ch. Sen, p 86.

as a lover of Christian manners and customs, the Hindu zenana and the restrictions about widow remarriage, must have been extremely distasteful to him. He longed to see social reforms introduced in our Hindu families—reforms on European lines. He not merely longed to see social reforms introduced but actually convulsed the Hindu Somaj while he was still in it, by giving his own widowed step-mother in remarriage under the Vidyasagar Act in 1862 While we were lads of about eleven, we heard with surprise and consternation in our little village, of the ultra-radical brothers, the two *Kalapahars* in the Hindu Somaj of Eastern Bengal, as we then thought of Kali Mohan and Durga Mohan to have been

About two years after that sensational widow remarriage, there took place in the Brahmo Somaj something equally sensational in Western Bengal, "the first marriage between persons of different castes in August 1864." "Keshub," says Mr. Mozoomdar, "to whom the bridegroom was well-known, was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the marriage" The bridegroom was no other than Mr Parvati Charan Das, the Purnea Pleader, a personal friend of Mr Durga Mohan Das. Though Keshub and Durga Mohan had not yet met, the news must have drawn Keshub nearer to Durga Mohan's heart Mr. S. R. Das told us that after the remarriage of his father's step-mother, his father had fully made up his mind to be baptized as a Christian He also told us what prevented Mr. Das' resolution being carried out. It was the study of Theodore Parker Who made Theodore Parker familiar to us? It was Keshub. Says Mr. Mozoomdar.—"Master of his own time, with unlimited aspirations, and abundant opportunities of every kind, Keshub began a correspondence with theists in other parts of the world"[1] In this way

[1] Mozoomdar's Life and Teachings of K. C. S., p. 76.

we all know he made the name of Parker familiar to every Brahmo in those early days When Kali Mohan saw that his brother Durga Mohan was still desirous of getting baptized, he asked him to listen to one request, to read Parker before taking any action. The result, as Kali Mohan anticipated, was that he abandoned the idea of becoming baptized as a Christian, his mind being thus drawn closer and closer to the Brahmo Somaj and its leader Keshub Chunder Sen.

The sensational preaching tour of Keshub in East Bengal then followed Says Mr Mozoomdar —"Towards the end of the year 1866, Keshub made a memorable tour through the province of East Bengal being accompanied by the two enthusiastic and saintly men, Bijoy Krishna Goswami and Aughore Nath Gupta."[1] How delighted Durga Mohan must have been to have heard of it, and to have soon after made the personal acquaintance of Keshub and his band for the first time in 1867, and then at Barisal. Says Pundit Shastri, though in his usual tame way, whenever he speaks of Keshub's services to the Brahmo Somaj :—

> "In July of 1867 Mr Sen accompanied by his family and many of his young friends visited Barisal to celebrate the marriage of Babu Nibaran Chandra Mukherji, a prominent member of the Progressive Party, with a sister of the Lakutia Zemindars Mr Sen delivered lectures which roused up quite an agitation"[2]

The reader will excuse a little digression here Bijoy Krishna had come to Barisal with his family, and it was at Barisal that a funny incident took place which shows the peculiarity of the Goswami's character and the influence of Durga Mohan Das . Pundit Shastri referring to this says that the Goswami came under the influence

[1] Mozoomdar's Life and Teachings of K C S, p 105
[2] Pt Shastri H. B S., p 215, Vol I.

of "Babu Durga Mohan Das, a pleader of the local Court," "the centre of a reformatory movement, most daring and radical in its scope"[1]—afterwards Mr. D. M. Das—the great social reformer and female emancipationist. Mr. Das had no difficulty in convincing the honest and unsuspecting Goswami that our ladies ought freely to go out in public, and that for that purpose, the Indian dress for the ladies was not suitable. No sooner was he convinced, than the Goswami would act up to his conviction The Goswami therefore got his wife dressed in gown and boots and appeared freely in public I should not be surprised, if Mr Das had to pay for the gown, if it were of any value, and the boots, for I am certain that the Goswami had not the wherewithal to pay for these. It is well-known that as long as that saintly lady Mrs D. M. Das, the friend of every widow, and of every orphan in the Brahmo Somaj, was in this world, Durga Mohan and his family were great helpers to the Progressive Brahmo Somaj led by Keshub Chunder Sen Kindred spirits indeed they were, but as we found it afterwards, with a difference With Keshub it was religion first, and social reform afterwards, while with Durga Mohan the order was reversed, being social reform first, and religion next That proved to be the little rift in the lute which afterwards widened, and alas they parted, Durga Mohan becoming in 1878, as we all know, the deadliest enemy of Keshub

Such, then are the men who composed Keshub's band of the faithful in those early days of the Brahmo Somaj Let the reader judge, if these be the men to be fettered down to the decisions of any man, or to the mandates of any "Representative Assembly," or to "the constitutional principle in the affairs of the Church," when they did not echo the still small voice within their own hearts?

[1] Pt. Shastri H. B. S., Vol. 1, p. 212.

KESHUB AND *Anusthanic* BRAHMOS

But all these and many others derived their inspiration and moulded their lives after Keshub who inaugurated that type of life and loyalty which has come to be called *anusthanic* (one not merely *professing* the faith and principles of the Brahmo Somaj but conscientiously following them in all the details of life). Who was he? Is real greatness and genuine life and spirituality the product of constitutionalism, majority-mongering and so-called democracy?—questions like these demand an answer.

In his essay on "Heroes and Hero-Worship" Carlyle says —

> "Universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns and in a wide sense, creators of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer, material result, the practical realization and embodiment of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world; the soul of the whole world's history it may justly be considered—were the history of these"

Who is pre-eminently the representative man of the Brahmo Somaj,—at least of the genuinely progressive section, the *Anusthanik* Brahmos, who have really staked their all on the success of the Brahmo Somaj? Let us appeal to an outsider, the celebrated candidate for Parliamentary election at Deptford,—the late Lalmohan Ghosh. When assailed by his rival at the election, and called a "heathen," Lalmohan proudly declared himself before the civilized world as belonging to that universal Church of God, which "the late lamented Keshub Chunder Sen" came to preach in England, as its representative His words, or at least

their substance, still ring in our ears, which from 1884 to 1887 were in the mouth of almost every Indian student. Not Raja Rammohun whose call was only truly realized when Keshub proclaimed before the world his doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man, and the harmony of the New Dispensation. Not Devendranath, who before he came into contact with Keshub, says in his autobiography :—" My disgust with and indifference to the Brahmo Somaj increased very much.. . I will fly away hence, wander everywhere, and never return."[1] Mr. Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, the biographer of Devendranath referring to this period observes :—

> "The influence of Devendranath's work was confined to few .. he stood almost alone in the field of his work.[2] Really this was not the work of any single man A body of men full of religious fire and enthusiasm was required They would break into pieces the old and reconstruct the new. As[3] the leader of such a body of young men Keshub Chunder entered the Somaj. Keshub entered the Somaj as if he was the driver of the victorious chariot of that age of revolution" . ..[4] The magnet attracts iron filings. Keshub's personality too did not fail to attract any one that approached him. He had a considerable amount of what in English is called 'personal magnetism' It seems he was from his birth endowed by nature with the right to be a leader of men "

" Plato is philosophy " said Emerson, so one may say Keshub Chunder is Brahmoism. Even Pundit Sitanath Tattwabhushan speaks of Keshub as " the representative man " of the Brahmo Somaj, to whom he is indebted for that religious ideal which has been

[1] Maharshi's *Atmajivani*, pp 141, 142
[2] Maharshi Devendranath, Ajit K. Chakravarti, p 269ff.
[3] ,, ,, ,, ,, p. 282
[4] ,, ,, ,, ,, p 310.

"the guiding star of his whole life, through all its doubts, trials and vicissitudes" And Pundit Shastri if he could only free himself from the bias of years, from the nightmare of the Protest Movement,—even he would not hesitate to call Keshub, the true great man of the Brahmo Somaj, *for it was to Keshub and not to Devendranath or anybody else that he went when he wanted to take the vow of initiation in 1869*

So long as the ideas and ideals of the Somaj were undergoing growth, the so-called constitution of our Somaj must of necessity be more or less fluid, more or less nebulous,—for the constitution is only a means to an end—the outward means to protect and help and not to retard, the growth of those religious ideas and ideals of man's relation to God on the one hand, and his brother-man on the other Indeed the growth of the constitution of the Somaj should be an organic growth from within the organism itself, and not something cut and dry thrust from without Let *the reader* think of those good old days of the Somaj, in the early sixties,—its high vitality and its bounding pulse, under Keshub Chunder and his band. Think of that band of men who far from taking any thought for the morrow, would even take no thought for to-day, and judge whether the introduction of a complicated constitution in those days, could do anything but retard the healthy and vigorous growth of the Somaj, as a truly religious body Think of Keshub's speech of Oct 30, 1864, in which, Devendranath presiding, he presents the main outlines of his idea of the Brahmo Somaj, which, he and his band struggled to realise, then was as it were, in the throes of a child-birth. I quote the following :—

> "Raja Rammohun Roy without establishing a particular doctrine or a particular religion, provided a Somaj (or prayer-hall) for the worship of one God, without distinction of caste. The President and the *Tattwabo-*

dhmi Sabha then organized the Somaj, and fixed its cardinal principles of faith. Considering how broad this religion is, it is impossible that there can be unanimity, consistent with each man's independence The ordinary members form the base of this Somaj The more enlightened as they rise higher and higher from the base upward, at last come to form the top *In this way both unity and freedom will be preserved* "[1]

Notice that even in those early days, Keshub was for harmony —the harmony of unity and freedom. Again at the Maghotsav of 1864, Keshub said.—

"Truth is not the slave of wealth, it is not the slave of even the emperors Truth is Brahmoism It is because of this every man has an equal right to it It is the religion of the past as of the present, of England as of India, of the learned and deep-sighted scholar as of the simple, unlettered peasant It is not like other religions, confined to particular nations or sects. By nature every man is a Brahmo The proportion in which a man pursues pure knowledge, in that proportion he is a Brahmo. Thirty-five years ago on this eleventh Magh, the great Rammohun Roy laid the foundation of this Brahmo Somaj On that day with a heart filled with joy, he called men of all countries and nationalities to a common prayer-hall to worship the true, the non dual God Behold that family spreading to the four quarters of the globe, of which the earth is the house, and God is the Father and the Mother "[2]

In the following year, 1865, at the Annual Meeting, October, the President, Babu Rajnarain Bose, proposed that "the missionaries should carry on their misson work under the direction of the *Pratinidhi Sabha*,—or the Committee of Representatives, and should be bound to submit to them the reports of their mission work" To this Keshub replied, contending that the mission-

[1] G G Roy's Keshub Chandra—Adi, p 213
[2] G G. Roy's Keshub Chandra—Madhya, p 1.

aries should be subject to no man, and to Committee of men, saying :—

> "Many of us are accustomed to look upon religious mission work in the light of worldly business In the first stages of religious mission work if instead of real spiritual love of religion and self-sacrifice, worldly notions are allowed to prevail, then the very fountain of religion becomes polluted In its earliest stages no religion was propagated in this world by means of money, etc. We should henceforth be very careful, otherwise grave danger is to be apprehended Therefore should we take steps to see that no worldly idea or feeling of subjection is instilled in the mind of our missionaries The missionaries are working out of a pure love of religion, taking no thought of their wordly interests, let us not now fill their minds with worldly ideas, nor bind them with the fetters of subjection Let them preach Brahmoism taking no thought of their life, and let us also undertake to look after their families as a serious duty, but it would be wrong to fix their salary and bind them with worldly fetters The word salary should be excluded altogether from the vocabulary of Brahmo mission work Let the missionaries with an undivided heart discharge their duty and let the meeting of representatives take the charge of maintaining their families"[1]

These are Keshub's ideas of the relation that should subsist between the missionaries of a new religion, and their congregation,—this is that fluid or nebulous kind of constitution which alone can have a place,— at least, during the fœtal stage of the growth of religion.

When we judge of the work done by the pioneers of the Brahmo Somaj it should be always borne in mind that we derive our idea of Church-government from the Christian Church History, especially that of Protestant England. It should be borne in mind that with a well-established church, say the Christian or even the

[1] G. G Roy's Keshub Chandra—Madhya Bibaran, pp 38, 9

Muslim for which the rites, principles and observances have been settled from father to son for many generations, the inflexible democratic constitution may be the best. But for a Church like the Brahmo Somaj, nebulous and fluent as in the days of Rammohun, Devendranath and Keshub Chunder, an inflexible democratic constitution cannot suit the needs of the times unless it is made more or less flexible to allow room for the working out of the ideas and ideals of the leaders through whom those ideas and ideals are revealed to the community, by a bifurcation of duty and authority such as has been shown above.

Such an inflexible constitution was sought to be thrust bodily upon the Brahmo Somaj of India in 1878 when the leaders of the Protest Movement took the constitution of a political body,—"*The Indian Association*," of which they were themselves at the head, as the ideal for a religious body like the Brahmo Somaj. The Protesters' organ, "*The Brahmo Public Opinion*" of March 21, 1878, spoke of the Brahmo Somaj of India as a joint-stock company, as "the outcome of years of struggle *on the part of the Brahmo body in general*," though they never entertained such an idea with regard to the Brahmo Somaj of the Maharshi or of the Raja Pundit Shastri threatening Keshub with the loss of his "leadership" of the "younger party,"[1] seems also to take his cue in 1911, from the idea expressed by the *Brahmo Public Opinion* in 1878. That only shows the depths of his animus against his own *guru*, Keshub This "*Brahmo body in general*," this so-called constitutionalism,—which is brought in only to serve as a weapon of offence, what place has it in the history of the Brahmo Somaj movement? So long as our Brahmo ideal had not finished its stage of fœtal growth, so long as the cardinal principles of Brahmoism

[1] Pt. Shastri's H.B.S. Vol. I, p. 161.

were still undergoing development first in the germinator of the Raja, then in the seed-bed of the Maharshi, and finally in the open field of Keshub,—the hearts and lives of his followers who "carry out in practice what they believe in their hearts," giving objective reality to the ideals of our faith, as one after another they came to be revealed, it was an extremely foolish act on our part to cry for a fully developed and complicated constitution It was a cry to place the cart before the horse A similar cry had been raised by the great Akshay Kumar Dutt in 1853. When he had organised the Society of Friends (Atmiya Sabha) in Maharshi's time, before Keshub joined the Brahmo Somaj, Akshay Kumar wanted to put every disputed question to the vote, and as a result the Maharshi feeling disgusted left for Simla for good, as he then thought, determined never to return. *The Brahmo Somaj thus left to pure and undiluted constitutionalism*, would have died away leaving not a trace behind, were it not that under special Divine Inspiration (where constitutionalism has no place) the Maharshi returned, just at the time when Keshub had also joined the Brahmo Somaj To have shipwrecked the Brahmo Somaj on a selfish cry of constitutionalism, twisting the Cooch Behar Marriage into a handle for party purposes. —for pocketing that "power in the land" to which Keshub had raised the Brahmo Somaj,—and to do so by *calling to our aid non-Brahmos of all grades*, the idolatrous and caste-observing sympathisers, the caste-keeping Adi Somajists, and those shoals of unfledged young politicians of Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose's Indian Association (without as yet any fixed religious principles at all) and then when our selfish party interests were realized, to kick down the ladder, by denying to the so-called sympathisers or *non-anusthanic* Brahmos, the right of voting, was, on our part, to say the least, a most silly if not a most wicked thing to do That

would be a most wicked trick to think of even in politics which no free country would allow, but in a newly born and growing religion such a trick is damning. Its only object was to establish a Timocracy in the Brahmo Somaj under the plea of giving it a democratic constitution. Such forced development by means of diplomatic *coup d'état* is an insult to democratic principles.

This leads us to the Cooch Behar Marriage agitation of 1878 which forms the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

COOCH BEHAR MARRIAGE CONTROVERSY

Pt. Shastri's *Version* miscalled "History"

Some of our readers will naturally ask,—"Why are we undertaking to discuss the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878, after the lapse of nearly half a century? What purpose can we serve by such *pishta-peshana*—this rethreshing of straw already threshed about forty years ago? Why can we not let the dead past of nearly half a century bury its dead?" In reply we say, we ought not. And Pundit Shastri would not let us, because in his "History of the Brahmo Somaj" he has raked up old sores, not for the sake of history which would have been justifiable, but, as we shall show, for the express purpose of obscuring the main issue and casting mud on the memory of Keshub.

Some time ago I happened to call on Mr Sasipada Banerji, a leading member of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj One of the first batch of seven protesters, who formed a Provisional Sub-Committee on February 8, 1878, (a month before the "offence" of the Cooch Behar Marriage was committed), Mr Banerji was appointed with the object of "watching the course of the agitation"[1] against the Marriage Thus, obviously, according to the Draconic code of the protesters, Keshub's punishment for the offence began from the 8th of February 'by anticipation'—for the offence

[1] Pt Shastri's H.B.S. Vol 1, p. 277.

alleged was not committed till the 6th March. What does it prove ? It proves that the real motive of the leading protesters was very different from the ostensible motive, that the leaders really longed in their heart of hearts for the offence, as they tried to make it out, to be committed so that they might twist it into a handle to work with in order to eviscerate Keshub of the Brahmo Somaj of India of his own rearing. It also indicates the studied character of the agitation, of the magnitude and volume it would consequently assume, which to make assurance doubly sure, was to be far out of proportion to the alleged offence. The following conversation took place between myself and Mr Sasipada Banerji --

Q —You were one of the first batch of protesters. What was Keshub's offence, pray ? Do you not think that when the boy and the girl had met, and had a liking for each other, the marriage ought to have taken place ?

A —Yes, after the word was given.

Q.—What, then, was Keshub's offence ?

A.—He ought to have waited for six months

Q —You admit, then, that the marriage ought to have taken place Do you know that by contract with a Christian Government, the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878 was only to be a solemn and formal betrothal, and that the Government, true to its promise, separated the parties immediately after the ceremony was over, and that the true marriage,--called the consummation ceremony--took place in right Brahmo style two or three years later ?

A —Yes

Q.—What, then, was Keshub's offence ?

A —What is the use of raising that question now ?

Q —Aye, you hanged an innocent man,--your own prophet, without a fair trial, (and Pt. Shastri still carries on his crusade of vilification against him though

gone to his rest long ago), and you ask me—'What is the use of raising that question now?' In reply I say —'It is indeed, quite immaterial for Keshub, but it is most material for you and me, for Pt. Shastri himself, and for our posterity The vitality and healthy growth of the entire Brahmo Somaj hangs on it'

There our conversation practically ended, for Mr Banerji then asked me to put the question by a letter and he would send me a written reply But that would be altogether a different matter and quite in the line of those agitators of old. However, I was not going to set him on a Columbus-like adventurous mission for the discovery of Keshub's offence, especially at his age. And we must not forget that the straightest path may be made to look zigzag under a magnifying lens of sufficient power. That question—'What is the use of raising the point now?'' should have been put to Pt. Shastri before he brought out his "History of the Brahmo Somaj"—so full of unjust and intentional aspersions and innuendoes against Keshub and his party Aye, that question it is doubly material to raise now, at least in the interest of Pundit Shastri himself and possibly also others of our leaders who are now verging on three score and ten It is doubly material that the example set by Pt. Shastri and the Protest-leaders be wiped off from the pages of the "History of the Brahmo Somaj." We should not lose sight of the wholesome lesson given by the poet —

> "We call our fathers fools, so wise we grow
> Our wiser sons will no doubt call us so"

I could very much wish that Pt Shastri would join me in the faithful discharge of a sacred duty to our Church. Would to God that my friend Pt. Shastri saw as I do, and had the openness and strength of mind to apologise and to make amends for the evil he has done, even though he should thereby incur the displeasure of his short-sighted admirers.

The protesters in those days had it all their own way. *The other side of the shield* was never presented before the public Like a 'hare whom hounds and horns pursue' Keshub suffered to be ferreted out by those of his so-called friends and followers. And since he was himself personally implicated, his self-respect would not allow him to plead for himself, his sense of dignity would not even permit his immediate friends and followers to plead for him personally, for his opponents might represent it to the public as inspired or even suborned. Let not Pundit Shastri or any of the leading protesters now living, for a moment imagine, that if it were possible for Keshub or any of his band of the faithful, to stoop so low as to adopt the mean trick of artificially bringing about a revolution in the Brahmo Somaj by strategic wire-pulling, canvassing and agitating, as the protesters avowedly did, Keshub could not have done it. The man whose voice called Pundit Shastri himself to be a fisher of men, and called Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose to join the Brahmo Somaj, [1]—let no one flatter himself to think that this man Keshub if only he moved his little finger, could not have created a counter-agitation more powerful than that of the protesters, that thousands after thousands from all parts of the country would not have flocked to his banner, and quite swamped that miscellaneous band of malcontent Brahmos and their motley crowd of colourless sympathisers.

The protesters knew full well that they were quite safe so long as they proceeded against Keshub personally. So long as Keshub was himself the victim of their persecutions he would not move The man who alone and unaided could, shake heaven and earth, and obtain redress for Major Tucker and Lieutenant

[1] They were both initiated by Keshub in 1869 though Pundit Shastri does not record this rather inconvenient fact in his History

(Miss) Thompson (who were prosecuted by the Governments of Bombay and Bengal, because 'they wore native dress and adopted native manners') who in 1882, even though his health was completely shattered, held the Town Hall meeting to neutralize the "attitude of the Bombay Government,"—and whose lion roar woke up the Government of India to grant the redress, that very man meekly bore the kicks from lawyer-politicians, *Kartabhajas* (a sect of man-worshippers), mesmerizers and spiritualists, and suffered, martyr-like, to be torn to pieces. It was thus that we (for I was myself one of them) could obtain a very easy victory over Keshub,—that noblest one of the age Indeed for Keshub to have launched a counter-agitation against the Triumvirate (Messrs Durga Mohan Das, Ananda Mohan Bose and Shivanath Shastri) of the protest-movement—who at one time were to him spiritually as the flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone—would be as unseemly as it would have been for the Maharshi to have launched one against Keshub or for Pt Shastri to launch one against me—his comrade-disciple from 1877

After the Cooch Behar Marriage "Keshub's enemies went even so far as to write anonymous letters to the Government authorities accusing him of misappropriating the funds of the Cooch Behar treasury Police detectives were set upon his track" "But", continues Mr Mozoomdar, "Keshub was exceedingly calm under these persecutions. He often said that posterity would do him justice" Shall posterity, then, prove itself unworthy of the confidence of Keshub? For the sake of the Brahmo Somaj,—our *alma mater*, we ought not to leave the matter to rest, where it does at present, for to leave it there, with the evangelist of our Brahmo Somaj represented as untrue to the fundamental principles of Brahmoism he himself promulgated, would be matricidal, would be suicidal Upon a critical ex-

amination of the facts about the Cooch Behar Marriage, we shall all be convinced that we did great wrong to Keshub who was always true to his principles,—that we petulantly bit off the hand that would feed us and would lay by food for our posterity, that the man whose prayers brought Heaven's light and life to the Brahmo Somaj, was not a man with an unsound heart, as the protesting leaders in those days tried to make out The mist must be cleared. It is a most delicate task. The path of the impartial critic is a narrow one,—thin as the edge of a razor For me personally, I do, indeed, feel that my path lies between the Scylla of ingratitude to the true founder of the Brahmo Somaj on one side and the Charybdis of ingratitude, on the other, to the three great leaders of the Protest-movement,—the late Mr A M Bose (the prophet of constitutionalism in Indian politics and ex-President of the Indian National Congress), the late Mr. Durga Mohan Das (the prince of Indian social reformers on European lines), and Pundit Shivanath Shastri, the poet whose allusion to Sankaracharya as "the terror of the atheists" first attracted my mind to the study of Shankara's philosophy and who has been also our pastor for a good many years To Keshub in whose hand Messrs Shastri and Bose and myself were all, at one time, as plastic clay for receiving the gospel of Brahmoism, and to the three leaders, Messrs Das, Bose and Shastri I am personally indebted in so many ways. But no personal considerations should be permitted to stand in the way where the true interests of the Brahmo Somaj, the country and of the whole world is at stake

A thick mist of misunderstanding due to misrepresentation, intentional or unintentional, almost hides from the public view that God-given personality which first called into existence the true Brahmo Somaj as the Universal Church of the future. That mist must be cleared. Unless the facts of Keshub's life are presented

to the public in their true colours, his writings and speeches and prayers, which are and always shall be a fountain of spiritual life and inspiration for the spiritually thirsty soul,—will, to us and to untold generations, lie unknown and unused, like a secret spring under our very hand. We and our posterity must freely drink of that living fountain, or else our Somaj shall suffer spiritual starvation which would spell death to her and to the country. With this brief preamble I proceed to discuss the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878 May the Most High "illumine what in me is dark, and what is low raise and support," that I may do my duty in the way it ought to be done.

The *Samadarshi* Party and The Schism

To understand the agitation and the schism of 1878 we should first understand the ideal and the composition of the Brahmo Somaj of those days The ideal of the Brahmo Somaj has always been to reconcile two apparently irreconcilable elements—e.g , to reconcile inspiration and faith with reasoning, or a *priori* knowledge with knowledge a *posteriori* as derived from experience, to reconcile spiritual life with worldly, secular duties. It is in one word to effect, as Keshub taught us, in our Brahmo Niketan days, the harmonious development of the whole man, individually as well as collectively. In the field of philosophy Hegel pulled down the wall that Kant had raised between knowledge a *priori* or immediate, and knowledge a *posteriori* or mediate, but it was the glory of Keshub to bring them into perfect unity in practical life in his harmony of knowledge (jnana) and works. (karma). I well remember those early days of our *Brahmo Niketan*, and the avidity with which we young men, belonging to it, swallowed the true Brahmo ideal set forth before us in 1876 and before, by the Founder of the Brahmo Somaj :—

> "There seems to be a principle of unity in the root of our life both physical and spiritual, which gives vitality, strength, consistency and beauty to all the elements of our being simultaneously, so that when they grow, they grow together" [1]

It may be said to the glory of the Brahmo Somaj that the Brahmo ideal of life is the demonstration of the truth of Hegel's dialectic method of thesis, antithesis and synthesis shorn of all its repulsive rigidity and its dry-as-dust logical character, and exhibit it in the fulness of beauty and harmony, as concretely realised by prayer and devotion, love and good works, or what Keshub called the harmony of *Jnan Bhakti, Karma and Yoga*, in our religious consciousness, personal and social As a suitable soil for the culture of this harmonious development of apparently incongruous elements, or if you prefer to call it, the concrete demonstration of the Hegelian Identity of Contraries, Providence seems to have so ordained from the beginning that the Brahmo Somaj should start into life as a Noah's ark, as a microcosmic epitome of the macrocosm, or in the language of the geologist, as a sort of conglomerate consisting of fragments of all kinds of rock, stuck together in a colorless or vitreous matrix of unlicensed freedom of thought and action. Indeed it is in allusion to this mixed character of the Brahmo Somaj, that our opponents in the early days of Keshub,—taunted Brahmoism with being but the conjugation of the verb "to think" in all its moods and tenses. That the younger generation of us may realize how the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878, came to be signalized by an agitation of almost a volcanic magnitude, *they should remember this motley composition of the Brahmo Somaj, to which men in those days flocked from all kinds of motives, good, bad and indifferent.*

Among the leading men of the Brahmo Somaj of

[1] Keshub's Theological Essays, 5th Edition, p. 150.

those days, three classes of men may be said to have become prominent. (1) The Rationalist or Empiricist, including the Deist, the veiled Positivist, the Benthamite, the Malthusian, (2) The Social Reformer on European lines, and the ultra-radical in national manners and customs, and even in dress, and (3) the Intuitionalist, — as the party of faith and inspiration called itself, in the early days of the Brahmo Somaj, but which afterwards developed into the party of Universal harmony There were indeed all shades of opinion between these extremes and the Brahmos for some years before the Cooch Behar Marriage would severely criticize each other's views. I remember as early as 1876 the malcontents of the Brahmo Somaj, specially Pundit Shivanath Shastri, in his *Samadarshi*, ridiculing Keshub's doctrines of inspiration, and special dispensation, and caricaturing them by remarks such as these. "The inspiration to-day is to eat lentils and not gram." They attacked each other's views about emancipation of women, 'denationalisation,' 'constitution,' 'asceticism' etc All these classes, however, finally crystallized, before the Cooch Behar Marriage, into two parties —(1) The party of the believers in inspiration and God-vision headed by Keshub Chunder Sen and his immediate followers, then living in the Bharat Asram, and (2) the somewhat deistic party of non-believers in inspiration, who would be guided by prudence or a calculation of results, headed by Mr Ananda Mohan Bose, the Cambridge Wrangler, who was almost my idol and the idol of the student world of those days, and assisted by his lieutenant, Pundit Shivanath Shastri They had their rendezvous at 93, College Street, where I, too, joined them in 1877 This party, we youngsters thought, represented the Modern Enlightenment of Europe, Keshub being looked upon by us as the representative of the 'apostolic age and enlightenment,' though in moments of sober reflection, we could

not fail to see that Keshub really had brought into a focus, as it were, in himself, all that was good and great in the past as well as in the present. I must here give the reader distinctly to understand that when I condemn the line of action taken by the protesters, I also mean to condemn myself for having given my tacit support, more, of course, as one of the thoughtless rank and file, than as one of the leaders.

As regards the doctrine of Divine Inspiration which had, about the time of the Cooch Behar Marriage, become the bone of contention in the progressive section of the Brahmo Somaj, it cannot be said that it had become quite explicit in Rammohun Roy's Brahmo Somaj, though it must be admitted to have been implicit in his *Gayatri* worship—(Bhargadevasya, etc.) "Whom we invoke to direct our understanding aright" (Wilson). As for Maharshi there can be no doubt that he sought for and realised Divine Inspiration on all vital matters of the spirit. Thus he says—"I laid my heart before God," that He may reveal to me the fundamental principles[1] of Brahmoism. In installing Keshub he says—"God is now bathing you with the waters of life eternal. In obedience to his command I, too, instal you in this office of Minister."[2] Thus Brahmoism is really based upon Divine Inspiration—not of course of an exclusive kind, as it was often misrepresented, but open to all earnest seekers, and

[1] "I felt deeply concerned as to what was now to be the common meeting ground of the Brahmos. The Tantra, Purana, Veda, Vedanta, Upanishad,—in none of them is there to be found a common ground for the Brahmos, nothing that can be utilized as the groundwork of the Brahmo religion. I came to the conclusion that there should be a cardinal principle of Brahmoism. Under this idea I laid bare my heart before God. I said, Do Thou enlighten the darkness of my heart. By His grace my heart became immediately enlightened. With the help of that light I beheld a principle of the Brahmo religion, which I at once noted down with a pencil on a slip of paper that was before me." See Maharshi's *Atmajivani*, p. 108.

[2] G. G. Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, Adi, p. 179.

no one who does not believe in Divine Inspiration could properly be called a Brahmo As for Keshub he says with emphasis,—"The New Dispensation is the religion of inspiration" *The protesting leaders, however, could not even tolerate any doctrine of the Brahmo Somaj not assented to by a majority of Brahmos,*[1] *as Secretary Shiv Chandra Dev contended* They could not therefore, inconsistent with their own views, call the Maharshi's *Brahmo Dharma Vijam*, nor Keshub's doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, harmony of all scriptures, religions, saints and sects, the doctrines of the Brahmo Somaj—which they could stand for—*for these had never been put to the vote*

I have been in the Brahmo Somaj for nearly half a century, but I know of no doctrine which was fixed as a doctrine of the Somaj, with the consent of "a majority of Brahmos" Thus the proposition set up by the Protest Secretary falls to the ground. It follows then that according to them, there was really no doctrine and, therefore, no Brahmo Somaj at all How, then, I ask, were the protesters themselves Brahmos? Again, if there was no Brahmo Somaj how and where did they propose to instal the votes of the majority in the place of the voice of God! These are the men who, as the champions of constitutionalism, transferred into the field of religion those weapons and tactics such as wire-pulling and canvassing (which they had become accustomed to use with marvellous success, in their political campaigns in connection with the Indian Association), and with these they set up a counter-movement among the followers of Keshub with a view to throw him overboard, under the plea of giving a democratic constitution to the Brahmo Somaj Inspiration in a truly religious body stands to its formal constitution,—whether democratic,

[1] "No doctrine ought to be promulgated as a doctrine of the Somaj which is not consented to by a majority of Brahmos"—Secretary Shiv Ch Dev —Pt Shastri's H.B.S. Vol. I, p. LXX.

or timocratic, in the relation of soul to body as Devendranath himself bears witness. To cut away the Brahmo Somaj from its original moorings in Divine Inspiration is but to take away its soul, leaving a mere dead body behind This would be the surest way to establish a plutocracy reducing the Somaj into a *taluk* (an invested property), thus undermining the Brahmo Ideal of Universal Brotherhood by placing the controlling power in the hands, perhaps, of a band of mammon-worshippers and wire-pullers.

The Protest Leaders' Creed

The first and the fundamental Article of the protest leaders' creed that "No doctrine ought to be promulgated as a doctrine of the Somaj which is not consented to by a majority of Brahmos," could have no place either in the Adi Somaj or in the Brahmo Somaj of India, both being based upon Divine Inspiration. Now to proceed with the further examination of this Benthamite dogma of the protest leaders' creed Suppose you want to know whether God is All-good and All-mighty. The protest leaders like their predecessor, the great agnostic, Akshaya Kumar Datta in 1853, would refer you to the votes of the majority Probably that majority, if sufficiently enlightened in their sense, would with J S Mill say, "God is either not All-good or not All-mighty, ' or with Herbert Spencer they would say,—"God is unknown and unknowable "

Thus would these people deify the majority,—possibly the unenlightened majority,—for example, it might be the Spanish Court of Inquisition as against a Galileo, in matters requiring special enlightenment,—thereby degrading the Brahmo Somaj into a body of mob-worshippers, or at best the worshippers of the average unenlightened men. And if that was their object, they did so *clandestinely*, without rousing any suspicion in the minds of the rank and file of their party. For

even Pundit Bijoy Krishna, the *true* father of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj in the sense of a truly religious body, or even many among the rank and file of the members, if they had known of it, would have disowned these majority-worshippers as their leaders, who would degrade Brahmoism into a refined form of the old *Avatarabada*, or doctrine of incarnations which they had discarded as idolatrous, so refined as to suit their modern Benthamite ideal, but really much more reprehensible than the worship of a Jesus, a Buddha, or even a Sri Krishna or any other ideal or superman. Thus these majority-worshippers are *avatarvadins* and as such idolators Where is there a place for these leaders in the Brahmo Somaj which Maharshi *cum* Keshub had founded on the basis of Divine Inspiration? Again, the opinion of the *mobile vulgus* changes from day to day If these enlightened idolatrous leaders be indeed Brahmos for the sake of argument, the fundamental principles of their Brahmo Somaj would also change from hour to hour, and would need at least a yearly revision to suit the hourly change in the views of the 'hydra-headed many" The Brahmo of one year may not be the Brahmo of the next Indeed with their boasted modern European enlightenment, the deified majority may any day rule that congregational worship is a relic of the barbarous superstition of the dark ages, a veritable waste of time in these days of civilisation, and decide to replace it by weekly tea-parties, so that the Ministers of the Somaj would find their occupation gone How mischievous the tyranny of the majority in Church matters,—the mob rule thrust upon the Brahmo Somaj under the plea of giving it a democratic constitution,—may prove, will appear from a study of the lynchings and other methods of mob-rule that form almost insoluble problems in the ideally democratic United States of America.

On the other hand if you put that question whether

God is All-good and All-mighty to the Maharshi[1] or to Keshub[2] or even to Pundit Bijoy Krishna (when he was the central figure and minister of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj), they would have told you in one voice to retire into your own heart and by earnest prayer to lay your heart bare before God, seeking for the answer from God Himself in your heart of hearts. Indeed the protesting leaders' assertion in 1878, that the opinion of the majority, for which they stood, invalidated the Divine Inspiration for which Keshub stood, was but a recrudescence of that of Akshaya Kumar and his *Atmiya Sabha* in 1856, which was one of the causes that drove Maharshi in disgust to the Hills of Simla. It is truly a marvel to us how the protest leaders, steeped in their superstitious faith in the votes of the majority, could win the sympathy of the Maharshi to their cause in 1878, with a substantial pecuniary support to boot The same clandestine way of procedure as regards doctrine, that hoodwinked Goswami and several others among the rank and file of the protesters, was no doubt equally successful also in the case of the Maharshi The most lynx-eyed among laymen, we know, are misled by the sophistries of expert lawyers If the Maharshi had perceived that the protesters really wished to instal the opinion of the majority on the throne of the Most High, he would

[1] Said the Maharshi in his autobiography, p 47-48 —"I had the vision of Him I heard His command I became His constant companion". 'O Lord I have seen Thee, do Thou show Thyself more vividly to me I have realised the highest good of life having heard Thy words Grant that I may hear Thy sweet words more and more"

[2] Says Keshub —"Now in order that we may realize in vision this personal unity, we must keep clear of all fancies and delusions, and proceed directly to His tabernacle and there behold the light of His face We must turn straight to this Divine Person, and see Him as He is without any medium"—God-Vision in the Nineteenth Century, Lectures in India, p 269.

surely have fled from them with a shudder in 1878, as he did in 1853 from Akshay Kumar and his band

But might not one ask when and where and how did the protest secretary obtain this majority dogma of his, for a doctrine of the Brahmo Somaj? Was it arrived at by intuition like the much-maligned Divine Inspiration or was it arrived at with the consent of a "majority of Brahmos?" If the latter, where and when did a majority of members sanction it? Not in the Adi Somaj where the Maharshi obtained the doctrines of the Somaj by Divine Inspiration and called them the *Brahmo Dharma Vijam*. Not in the Brahmo Somaj of India either, where Keshub and his band of the faithful obtained the doctrines also from Divine Inspiration. Nor could they have obtained the sanction of the majority of Brahmos for their majority doctrine, at a mixed gathering like the protesters' Town Hall meeting of May 15, 1878, where there could be at the most only a hundred real Brahmos among an audience of about fifteen hundred non-Brahmos, and therefore, it could not and was not put to the vote. Where and when, we repeat, did they put their majority dogma to the vote for the sanction of the majority of Brahmos? Nowhere, unless it were at their political conclave at the Indian Association In their fanatical zeal for throwing Keshub overboard[1] from the Brahmo Somaj, they transferred as a doctrine of our Brahmo Somaj what they had discovered in their political connec-

[1] Indeed their nervousness had so unsettled their mind, that they had not even the courage to cause to be read before the Town Hall meeting on the 15th May 1878, the letter that the accused, Keshub whom they were trying, had sent to them for that purpose through Mr Protap Ch Mozoomdar Practising lawyers though they were, they so far forgot their law that they thereby denied to Keshub the privilege of defence that even the Law Court allows to the worst criminal Inebriated with that imperialistic constitution of theirs, they proceeded to condemn the sacred doctrines of the Brahmo Somaj founded upon Divine Inspiration in the name of the rule of the majority, the political dogma of the Indian Association

tion at their Indian Association No wonder that the young men of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj are to-day being goaded on by the same spirit of imperialistic constitutionalism (which characterizes the present-day leaders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj on whom has fallen the mantle of the protest leaders of old) to think of creating another schism in the Brahmo Somaj.

The fact is, in those days, ideas of 'Liberty,' 'representative government,' 'the rights of man,' 'the social contract,' 'no taxation without representation,' 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number,' and other staple notions of the European political market of the seventies, like new wine in old bottles, filled our brains brimful causing a great effervescence. About that time the late Mr. A M Bose, the first Indian Wrangler, came from England with quite a brainload of political cargo of the 'democratic' type The educated youth of the country gladly accepted him as their political leader and joined him in opening the Indian Association. But we counted without our host, for in a subject country a democratic constitution must be more or less a sham, or as it has since been said, "a subject country has no politics" The Indian Association did not satisfy the educated youth who felt its tall talk too tame They looked round for a safety valve to give exit to those political fumes that filled their brains The leaders of the Indian Association were mostly Brahmos and Brahmo sympathisers, they naturally thought the progressive Brahmo Somaj of India as the best and safest place for a *constitutional* experiment. But to do so, Keshub himself must be thrown overboard and the Brahmo Somaj brought absolutely under the control of the Indian Association men, that is, Mr. A M Bose, Pt. Shastri and others Keshub could not suspect their true motive, so that he himself showed his willingness by accepting the Presidentship of the Representative Assembly formed in 1877, with Mr. A M. Bose as Secretary

and Pt. Shastri as Assistant Secretary. Indeed baffled in their attempts to achieve any success in the political field, Pt Shastri's so-called constitutionalists diverted the channel of their constitution-building activity, and as Pt Shastri says.—"began to agitate for the introduction of methods of constitutional church government in the management of the affairs of the church in general" In 1877, says Pundit Shastri, "the Representative Assembly was duly formed."[1] But this was to be only the thin end of the wedge, the real object being to oust Keshub Chunder, men like Mr A M Bose and Mr. D M. Das, both practising lawyers, lent the weight of their names to Pt. Shastri to do what could be done to feed fat his grudge of 1873, for his expulsion from the Bharatasram While Pt. Shastri was biding his time, came in 1878 the Cooch Behar Marriage, which, with their control of a long purse and the quadrimanous activity of a campaign of door to door canvassing and agitation, they could easily manipulate into a ground for the eviction of Keshub

There is no reason to think that the protest leaders were serious when they discussed points of doctrine They were latitudinarians ready to 'swallow camels' if it served their purpose[2] They were not disposed to hold a council of Nice or a council of Pataliputra to settle the creed of the Brahmo Somaj, as had been

[1] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol I, p 266

[2] I remember that in 1902 or thereabouts in the lifetime of Mr A. M Bose I asked the Secretary of the S B Somaj by a letter, to decide at a General Meeting of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, of which I was then a member, whether the Kartabhajas—whom I knew (for having myself belonged to that body for about a year) to be a class of man-worshippers and superstitious idolators, the worshippers of their *Karta* or Master *Aulya*—could sit on the pulpit of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, as some of them were actually doing No notice was taken I wrote to *The Indian Messenger* of those days on that subject My writings were not published I was compelled to part company with such a body of time-servers, as I considered the then leaders to be, tendering my resignation which was quietly accepted The reader would however make a mistake, if he should identify the rank

done of old for Christianity and Buddhism. As soon as their object of the evisceration of Keshub was realised, they showed themselves to be perfectly indifferent to points of doctrine, moral or religious Indeed, those very men who recklessly accused Keshub of setting up immoral doctrines in the Brahmo Somaj, in the name of Divine Inspiration, quietly and complacently installed as minister of the Sadharan Somaj a man who had two wives, and who had been disqualified years ago on this very ground, to become a missionary in Keshub's Brahmo Somaj of India As for points of doctrine the protest leaders raised them only as means to an end, and not an end in itself. At the very Town Hall meeting of 1878, they appointed a *Kaitabhaja* Sj Umesh Chandra Datta, as the first Assistant Secretary of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj The whole thing was but another case of "the hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long, it had its head bit off by its young' They merely sought to make a *prima facie* case, as the lawyers say,—on the plea of doctrine, and they did it with marvellous success. Keshub had raised the Brahmo Somaj into a power This power became Keshub's bane, and it was the lust of this power which made some of the protest leaders jealous[1] of Keshub They coveted it, and by hook or by crook they disgraced Keshub[2] and came to the possession of this power Like the foolish peasant woman in the story, who out of covetousness killed and ransacked the bowels of her darling duck, that gave her

and file of the S B Somaj with these leaders,—though for this and for similar other reasons he may justly look upon their rank and file as somewhat backboneless and unfit for a Somaj which aims to be governed on democratic lines

[1] There was an undercurrent of jealousy always at work to damage his influence in this country —P C Mozoomdar's Life of Keshub, p 244

[2] It was reported to us in those days, that Keshub then said to himself in a sort of soliloquy —"Who appoints and who dismisses,"—referring of course to the Divine Voice within him that had called him to the Ministry of the Brahmo Somaj

a golden egg daily, we killed and eviscerated our great master for the greed of that 'power,' and as a condign punishment for the wrong we did, we, including the most hardened of the protest leaders, on the very day of Keshub's ascension, by our wails and lamentations in the neighbourhood of the *Sadharan Brahmo Somaj* proclaimed to the world our sad discovery that "our house was left unto us desolate!"

The Three "Obnoxious" Doctrines.

The "*Brahmo Public Opinion*;" the official organ of the protest-leaders, of April 4, 1878, contains the following:—

> "On Saturday last, the 30th March, Babu Shivnath Shastri delivered a discourse in Bengali on "The Past, Present and Future of Brahmoism" He contended with three *most obnoxious doctrines* which have *recently crept* into the Brahmo Somaj, namely, the doctrines of Great Men, Special Dispensation and *Adesh* or Divine Inspiration."

It was in allusion to this and such other discourses of Pundit Shastri, that Bhai Gour Govinda Roy says:—"The protestors had for a long time been dissatisfied with the three doctrines of: (1) Great Men, (2) Special Dispensation, and (3) Divine Command, also called Inspiration. Pundit Shastri both by his public utterances and his writings had disclosed it."[1]

What has Pundit Shastri been doing? In his "The New Dispensation and the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj," of 1881, we find Pundit Shastri writing:—"Apart from the doctrine of Great Men, two other doctrines of ominous import, viz, the doctrine of *Adesh* or Divine Command, and the doctrine of *Vidhan* or Dispensation began to be preached with some degree of energy and

[1] G. G. Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, Madhya, Vol 6, p 981.

consistency, at this time by Mr. Sen and his missionaries."[1] Speaking of Great Men, Pt. Shastri observes :—

> "Is it not more reasonable to look upon the world's Great Men more as Earth's delegates to Heaven, than as Heaven's representatives? Are they not properly speaking, extraordinarily gifted individuals, in whom the collective prayers of a race find a representation and a vent? Does not a careful perusal of history tell us that they do not appear as Heaven's commissioned agents, but as the ablest exponents of the unuttered but widely-felt thoughts and sentiments of their race and times,—that the individual rays of many minds are brought into a focus in them—that their age makes them—that they are the children of many little minds; consequently, they do not come to rule or to give law, but are rather pushed forward by the surging waves of national sentiment to be their leaders and mouthpieces,—and to serve them as their advocates?"[2]

"Their age makes them", so that God has no part in making them. Does not this reveal the cloven foot of deism? As regards the time this "most obnoxious doctrine of Great Men" was not one which "recently crept" into the Brahmo Somaj, or "preached just at this time" (1878), but was recognised by the Maharshi as early as 1860. In his *Brahmo Dharmer Vyakhyan* No. 12, he says :—"As God has planted the seed-sprouts of his idea in every soul, so also does He send here Great Men when the time comes to help in their development....By sending these, God attracts to Himself thousands and thousands of people" Secondly, the doctrine of Special Dispensation was also not one that had "recently crept into the Brahmo Somaj." From 1835 on, it had been preached and emphasized upon, and Maharshi's Autobiography is full of such instances of Special Dispensation. Indeed we Brahmos have always

[1] Pt Shastri's "The N D and the S B S," p 25
[2] Pt Shastri's "The N D and the S.B S," pp. 52, 53.

regarded our Brahmoism as a Special Dispensation of Providence In the same way we have always regarded the contact of the West and the East in India as a Special Dispensation of God. Thirdly, about the Doctrine of Inspiration, Pundit Shastri says —

> "Another point of difference is the Doctrine of *Adesh* or Divine Command It is a morbid development of the Doctrine of Inspiration.... To every pious and faithful soul, every act impelled by a sense of duty is inseparably associated with the will of God" [1]

Pt. Shastri seems to suggest a distinction between Inspiration and *Adesh* stigmatizing the latter as a *morbid development* Anything beyond this imaginary "*association*," any perception of a command as received by the Maharshi at Simla and Guskarah would thus come under Pt Shastri's category of a "*morbid development*" If so, why did Pt Shastri single out Keshub for his attack? Pt Shastri takes his stand upon the deistic position of an extra-cosmic God, and it was this deism against which the far-sighted Keshub preached 'desperate and deadly war," for to him it was "the half-brother of atheism, spreading nihilism and cutting the root of all faith" Thus Pundit Shastri's attitude seems to have been more of a sort of personal hostility than the defence of a principle.

Now let us come to Keshub It appears that Keshub Chunder Sen had delivered his celebrated lecture on "Great Men," in 1866, in which he had drawn the outlines of these "three doctrines of ominous import" With regard to Inspiration he said —

> "The entire religious life of the 19th century betrays a lamentable want of spiritual insight, and of that direct inspiration which alone can give us light unto salvation....In order that we may be sanctified

[1] Pt Shastri's "The N D. and S.B S ," pp 66, 67.

and saved we must hold direct and personal communion with God, each for himself, and so feel and establish our relations with him, that our hearts may be for ever open to His living and holy inspiration ..Nothing however can bear comparison with the almighty power of inspiration . .The highest revelation then, is inspiration, where spirit communes with spirit, face to face without any mediation whatsoever Like leaven it leaveneth the whole life Its process is not slow and calculating but revolutionary. Here we see no appeal to reason or public opinion, no calculation of profit and loss according to the arithmetic of expediency, no reference to consequences ..We all need to be baptized with the fire of inspiration and enthusiasm." [1]

As for his doctrine of Special Dispensation, we also find it outlined in the same lecture —

"The creator of the Universe is the Father of each individual man All His Dispensations are general as regards the world at large, but they are special as far as they fall within the bounds of our individual life, and are respectively partaken by us . While we worship God as the Creator and Upholder of this vast and magnificent universe as a totality, we offer Him the grateful homage of our hearts as our Merciful Father for the particular benefits we derive from His works" [2]

Concerning the third of these so-called obnoxious doctrines, that of "Great Men," Keshub had said —

"In what manner does God manifest Himself in history? Through great men The history of the world, says Carlyle is the biography of great men. It is with the masses of mankind as with armies, they act by their leaders themselves unknown and unnoticed....

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Great Men," p 331

[2] Compare with these Emerson's observations on "Representative Men" "The world is upheld by the veracity of good men". "When Nature removes a great man people explore the horizon for a successor, but none comes and none will "

> We are to understand his superiority to be one of degree, not of kind For it must be admitted that every man is in some measure, an incarnation of the Divine Spirit Certainly every man is an incarnation And great men are pre-eminently so Great men appear when they are needed Great men cast their shadows before To honour them is to honour our benefactors, and to glorify the greatness of human nature.... With what is personal, local and contingent in them we have certainly nothing to do, but that which is divine and universal in them, that which makes them great men, deeply concerns us all, for it is God's gift to us "[1]

The reader has here before him, in outline, Keshub's views about all the doctrines,—all promulgated as early as 1866 Who but a deist or rationalist or what we in this country call a *Haituka*, would object to these doctrines of Keshub, as obnoxious? And there can be but one answer to the question—"Were Pt Shastri and those he stood for, deists *in those days*? The question next arises, if Pt Shastri regarded these doctrines promulgated in 1866, as really "*obnoxious*" from the beginning, we have a right to enquire how, three years after Keshub had promulgated those "obnoxious" doctrines, Pt. Shastri, with his colleague Mr A M Bose, came to be initiated by that 'obnoxious' preacher in 1869. Evidently, then, before 1869, Pt. Shastri did not regard these three doctrines as 'obnoxious.' When did the change in Pt Shastri's opinion take place?[2]

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, Great Men, p 38 ff

[2] A few words about Pt Shastri's changes will, perhaps, be not out of place here It was in 1868 that Pt Shastri was drawn to Keshub personally on the occasion of the Nagar Kirtan of the Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Somaj In 1869 he took the vow of initiation along with many others from Keshub and discarded his Brahminical thread From 1869 to 1872 he contributed at least 12 Bengalee poems to the columns of the *Dharmatattwa*,—sweet, simple and impassioned effusions on such topics as "The Mandir Building," "Keshub in England," "*Bharatasram*," "Maghotsav" etc . In 1873, after a year's stay at the *Bharatasram*, he had to leave under unfortunate circumstances From

Has it not some connection with an incident during his stay at the *Bharatasram* in 1873, which is referred to in Upadhaya Gour Govinda Roy's book.[1]

Miss Collet as King-maker.

Nevertheless, good reader, beware of visiting the rank and file of the Protest Movement with the iniquity of some of the leaders who had their own axes to grind. Even among the leaders, for aught we know, Messrs A. M. Bose and D. M. Das, never put forward before the public, any special views of their own, in matters of church doctrine, and they scarcely ever sat on the pulpit even of the Church they founded Later on, however, Pt Shastri, weathercock-like shifted his position, and abandoned his opposition to his "there obnoxious doctrines," perhaps to bring himself into a line with those of Miss Collet, the protesters' Trinitarian ally, singling out Keshub's Doctrine of Inspiration for attack. The ball of opposition to Keshub's doctrine of inspiration, too, was first set rolling by a Trinitarian Christian in London It is well known among us that even things absolutely Indian acquire a new value when they are imported from England. The protest leaders knew it well, and they lost no time in transferring their theatre of warfare, in the Cooch Behar

this time on, that is from 1873 to the middle of 1874 he was slowly but surely drifting away from Keshub and his personal influence, till he came out in a new guise, as the Editor of the *Samadarshi*, in November, 1874 Here he became the spokesman of that Deistic group of which Akshaya Kumar and after him Mr Rajnarain Bose, of the Adi Somaj, were two of the principal figures Any reader of the *Samadarshi* would know that its main object was to bring Keshub into disgrace From 1874 the gulf widened, Pt Shastri disowning and ridiculing most or all of that finer type of piety and spirituality which had come to him through his association with Keshub.

[1] G G Roy's Achaiya Keshub Chandra, Madhya, Vol. V, p 908.

affair, to England, where they could call to their aid Miss Collet, an orthodox Trinitarian Christian lady who always patronized the Brahmo Somaj and the Brahmos in England. To one of the protest leaders, Mr Ananda Mohan Bose, whom as a young man of twenty-two, Keshub left in her charge in 1870, she stood almost in the relation of a loving mother, and any movement engineered by Mr. Bose, she looked upon with all the partiality of a mother That lady also gave me valuable help, when I was in England by introducing me to some of the English theists The success of the protest movement in England was mainly due to her co-operation,[1] and what succeeded in England in those days was bound to filter down and succeed among the educated classes in India Let us, therefore, briefly notice the position of Miss Collet

Miss Collet could not be more liberal than her orthodox Trinitarian faith allowed Her sympathies like those of others of her denomination, for the Brahmos and the Brahmo Somaj, were those of one working for 'the conversion of the heathen'. To her Inspiration and Revelation were, more or less matters of the past, —specially confined to the apostles and evangelists of her Church For others even in her Church, they were things that might be hoped for, but could only be realized when the millenium came For her to accept Keshub's doctrine of "Universal Inspiration" as true Divine Inspiration as anything but "the deification of a blind impulse," would be to give up her own faith So long as Keshub confined himself merely to theorizing about inspiration as a pious hope it was all right; but the moment he claimed to receive inspiration, both

1 "The weakest romance is not so stupefying as the lower forms of religious exciting literature, and the worst romance is not so corrupting as false history, false philosophy, or false political essays"—Ruskin's—"Sesame and Lilies" para 76

for himself and others who sought for it, in the practical details of daily life, he became intolerable to her, and she joined with the protesting leaders in India, and their agents in England, (such as Mr Sasipada Banerji and others who were then in England), and created havoc among the European supporters and admirers of Keshub It was a strange combination, indeed, between a Trinitarian orthodox English Christian, and those Indian deists who called themselves theists. So all-engrossing was the desire of the protest leaders for the evisceration of Keshub that they welcomed any combination for the realization of their object For already here in India they had combined with the Adi Somaj with that object, and their organ, the *Brahmo Public Opinion* of 12th December, 1882, had expressly said —

> "In point of fact we differ less from our friends of the Adi Somaj than those of the Brahmo Somaj of India"

and they might have said the same thing about Miss Collet, so long as she helped them by circulating their calumnious reports among the English admirers of Mr. Sen.

The *Inquirer*, one of the most respectable journals of the Unitarian Society, had, in one of its issues, given the Cooch Behar Marriage its support and approval by calling it providential It so shocked the orthodox predispositions of Miss Collet that she at once wrote to that Journal to say :—

> "That would doubtless have been true of the Keshub Ch Sen in 1870, but I do not think it is true now."

She goes on to assume, taking her cue entirely from the protest leaders, that 'a change has resulted in Mr. Sen,' which is to be looked upon as a psychological problem' She stigmatizes, in the manner of her prompters in India, Keshub's Inspiration as the 'deification

of a blind impulse.' Later on (*Brahmo Public Opinion*, September 5) Miss Collet accuses Keshub's Inspiration, almost in the words of the protest leaders to be "at variance with the laws of morality and reason," without caring to indicate in what respects they were so. The facts being local, she had to rely on the interested misrepresentations of her Indian mentors Are we in India also to accept the doubly-distilled hearsay to which she has given her seal and sanction, as gospel truths, against the ocular evidence of men like Protap Chunder, Gour Govinda and others who were on the spot and personally present on the occasion and actually took part in it ?

Now, a word about what happened between Miss Collet and our revered Bhai Banga Ch. Roy, whom Miss Collet herself called—"the excellent Brahmo minister of Dacca"—as quoted by the *Brahmo Public Opinion* April 4, 1878. Bhai Banga Chandra gave me the facts from memory as to what happened between him and Miss Collet Miss Collet wrote to him saying—"That when Mr. Sen had so humbled himself to the dust, just before giving his consent to the Cooch Behar Marriage, praying to God for guidance because he could not trust to the dictates of his own unaided conscience, —how can you believe that only two or three days after this Keshub received an *Adesh* or command from God, and gave his consent ?" Bhai Banga Chandra[1] wrote in reply, taking the facts to be as Miss Collet represented them, that that was exactly the condition in which one is entitled to receive an *Adesh* or command from God So that the reason which led Miss Collet to conclude

[1] Bhai Banga Chandra himself told me that regarding the Cooch Behar Marriage, while he himself and his Dacca band, too, felt disturbed in spirit, the faithful Kailash Chandra Nandi alone stood unmoved Mr Nandi said, "With Keshub the Cooch Behar Marriage was a Divine Command, can we too say with equal firmness that to protest against it is with us also a Divine Command ? If not, we should not move an inch from our ground of loyalty to our evangelist Keshub "

that Keshub cannot have received the *Adesh* was to Banga Chandra just the reason that led him to conclude that Keshub should receive, in answer to his prayers, the command from God Miss Collet's failure, in her mission of canvassing on behalf of the protestors in India itself, by influencing men like Banga Chandra, seems to have so upset her that she did not write to him any more letters It seems however that through her influence, Miss Manning wrote to Banga Chandra, expressing her regret that he believed in the 'dangerous doctrine' of *Adesh* promulgated by Keshub. We all know that this second attempt at canvassing by Miss Manning met with the same fate as the first. Miss Manning was well known to me She was a Unitarian but more or less of the deistic type, and so far a kindred spirit to the protest leaders She took a special interest in the spread of social reform in India on European lines, which was also the goal of Messrs A. M. Bose and D M Das I knew Miss Manning well and, when in England, I used to write for her magazine, which was devoted specially to the work of social reform in India, and in this Messrs A M Bose, D. M Das and Manmohun Ghosh were great helpers

To us personally, it always seemed—long before the Cooch Behar Marriage,—an anomaly that Miss Collet, a Trinitarian Christian lady of the old school, should meddle so much with the affairs of the Brahmo Somaj. *Why should she evince much more than a partisan's blind zeal, in a local controversy* affecting a community so different from her own? In the Cooch Behar affair, we always find whenever anyone called it 'providential,' or raised his voice to do justice to Keshub, she would at once confront with a wolfish growl, venting the proverbial woman's hate in her When Mr. Mozoomdar's *Theistic Quarterly Review* reached her, Miss Collet, like a faithful sentinel of the protest leaders at once wrote to the *Inquirer* giving "warning against too implicit a

reliance on its representations of Brahmo affairs." The object of the *Review*, she represented or rather misrepresented to be

> "to uphold Mr Sen's supremacy as a divinely commissioned teacher, and to throw every possible discredit upon those who have objected to his doctrines, or seceded from his leadership.... The aggressive part of the account is made up of personal accusations which abound with the *suppressio veri*, and often with something worse than the *suggestio falsi*..... How recklessly he flings out his accusations,. and how little his statements can be trusted on plain matters of fact."[1]

Aye, statements made by an eye-witness of the rank of Mozoomdar, whom his worst enemies must admit to have been one of the fathers of the Brahmo Somaj, cannot be trusted on plain matters of fact, as against the irresponsible drolleries of an anonymous writer (*Saraspakshi*, who was no other than my friend and class-fellow Babu Nava Kumar Chakravarti brought up for a time in Keshub's Brahmo Niketan) in the *Samalochak*, who from his insignificant position in the Cooch Behar Raj service, could not be presumed to have been an eye-witness, and who was even then paving the way for his becoming a turn-coat of the Brahmo Somaj, as he did become, in less than a year after Miss Collet, living more than three thousand miles away, from the scene of the events was being fed on the mere chaff and husk of a doubly-sublimed hearsay, reported to her by her protesting mentors in Calcutta. The protesters themselves were also being fed on such chaff and husk (inadmissible as evidence in a court of law), brought to their ears by calumnious spies, set on by those revengeful Indian officers of the Cooch Behar Raj, whose ire and envy Keshub had incurred because he did not consult them but, in all questions of doubt or dispute,

[1] *Brahmo Public Opinion*, Jan 5, 1879.

went direct to the Government. Thus did Miss Collet, blind in her zeal to serve the cause she had espoused, most impudently proceed to impeach as *suppressio veri*, and *suggestio falsi*, the reports of facts written by Mr Mozoomdar himself who was not only an eye-witness of the whole affair but actually took a most prominent part in it "The woman that loves the child more than its mother is a witch," says the Bengali proverb.

Again, do we raise the question,—what could Miss Collet's motive be? Possibly it flattered her vanity to play the patronizing king-maker among a deistic body of social reformers on European lines in a heathen country! But one thing is certain! She saw which way the wind was blowing, she saw that Keshub's ideas in their ultimate developments would not suit her Nor could she brook the thought that Keshub should be looked upon "as a divinely-appointed teacher"—as a large section even of our Sadharan Brahmo Somaj to-day look upon him to be When Keshub called God our Mother, Miss Collet full of the prejudices of her own denomination about "the *immaculate* birth," was so shocked that she called it 'undisguised blasphemy' Keshub's idea that the Brahmo's religion is to be "the religion of Universal Inspiration," it was impossible for her to tolerate. But, worst of all,—an orthodox Trinitarian Christian could not but feel sick could not be expected to stand by, when such outrageous assertions as the following were openly made by Keshub:—

> "With no phase of Hindu faith and mythology can I dare to trifle Buddhism has for me a charm truly divine, and to me Mahomet is a servant and a great apostle of God"[1]

Keshub, therefore must go, must be unkinged. No deist brought up in European ideas could tolerate him. The uncrowned king of the Brahmo Somaj must be

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol. II, p. 56.

unkinged The Cooch Behar Marriage brought with it the most auspicious combination of circumstances. That was just the time to do it. That really seems to have been the reason why Miss Collet meddled so uncalled for in the affairs of the Brahmo Somaj

MISS COBBE, MAX MULLER AND REV MR VOYSEY

If the opinions of untravelled English friends, like that of Miss Collet or of Miss Manning, based on the doubly-sublimed hearsay supplied by the protestors from India, should have any weight with us in a matter so entirely local and personal as the marriage of a man's daughter, the following extract from the letter of Miss Cobbe to the Editor of *The Christian Life*, London, published in the *Brahmo Public Opinion* of May 16, 1878, should be a sufficient reply to the insinuations of Miss Collet Miss Cobbe writes —

> "You and many of my most respected friends think he (Keshub) would have done better to decline them (the marriage proposals), while I, on the contrary, am of opinion that he would have incurred a very grave and grievous responsibility, in closing the door against a project holding out such high hopes for his country" 'As he quitted me one day after a long converse on things of the soul I remember to have said to myself, 'Now I think I understand somewhat of how men and women felt who talked to Christ'" 'To suppose that such a man as he, could be touched by the motive of vulgar ambition is the very last idea I should entertain"

On a matter of doctrine which vitally concerned the Theist and the Unitarian, the opinion of Miss Collet, a Trinitarian, should surely carry less weight than that of Miss Cobbe, the lady philosopher of the theistic school, the authoress of "Religious Duty", "Alone to the Alone" etc., which in the early days of the Brahmo Somaj we valued as dearly as Parker's *Essays*, Hedge's *Reason in Religion*, and Seeley's *Ecce Homo*.

To all this let me add the testimony that the great scholar, Prof Max Muller, bore to the character of Keshub, in about 1888—*i e.*, ten years after the Cooch Behar Marriage,—when all the excitement of those days had completely subsided The protestors had approached him, too, so that the whole case had been before him for years, and he had fully weighed all sides. In the course of a long conversation, he asked me how I came to take an interest in the Vedanta philosophy. In my reply I had barely to allude to the fact that I was a Brahmo. Then, without stopping to enquire whether I was a Sadharani or a Navavidhani (I was really a Sadharani), the learned Professor, as if identifying the Brahmo Somaj with Keshub, burst forth saying to me,—"*Yame Vaisha Vrnute tena labhya, tasyaisha atma vrinute tanum swam*"—"Keshub was a man to whom God had revealed Himself" After that declaration of a deliberate decision arrived at by the greatest thinker and Vedic scholar of Oxford would the reader require further proof that Keshub was an inspired religious teacher of his age, and the greatest glory of India? After this are we justified in treating Keshub's inspirations with levity which characterized Miss Collet, or to take serious notice of Pt Shastri, the weather-cock spokesman of the protest leaders of those days?

It will not do to forget, in this connection, the Rev. Charles Voysey,[1] the true high priest of English Theism who, taking all things into consideration, came nearest to our Brahmo ideal, and among Englishmen has the greatest right to pass an opinion on anything affecting the Brahmo Somaj. Yet the Editor of *The*

[1] Mr Voysey had made the greatest sacrifice in the cause of theism in England, and was the first among English theists to recognise formally in an English Church, the high place due to our ancient Indian Theism, giving our Bhagavat Gita a place by the side of the Bible in his Church, in Swallow Lane, London where I myself heard him preach a very inspiring sermon on a text taken from the Gita

Brahmo Public Opinion (who later on in life himself relapsed into Hinduism, but at the time posing as the spokesman of the Brahmo Somaj)—speaks contemptuously even of the Rev. Charles Voysey himself, with a sneer at "Babu Sen" for no other reason than that Voysey, after having weighed all the slanderous reports, spread in England by the Protest leaders through Miss Collet like an honest and fair-minded judge, asked Keshub what he had to say Unlike our Protest leaders Voysey would not condemn a man unheard, and gave his verdict—so unwelcome to the Protest leaders,—"that Chunder Sen was justified in the course he pursued" Our Brother of the *Brahmo Public Opinion* would seem to bully lawyer-like, even Rev Mr Voysey (although those who really belonged to the Brahmo Somaj in the early seventies would always rank him with Parker and Newman), as enjoying his (Keshub's) confidence, taunting him with being a great admirer of Babu Sen Says the "Brahmo Public Opinion" of May 29, 1879 —

> "The Reverend gentleman is a great admirer of Babu Sen and evidently enjoys his confidence, for he tells us that having received from the great leader himself his own narrative of the transaction, and his own explanation of the grounds of his behaviour I feel convinced that Chunder Sen was justified in the course he pursued"

In the same breath they extol to the skies Miss Collet saying :—

> "A more solemn truth was never uttered than that contained in Miss Collet's statement that the sceptre has departed from the Brahmo Somaj of India, and that for the large majority of the earnest, faithful and active members of the Brahmo Church, the leadership of Keshub Chunder Sen has ceased to exist"

But oh, phoenix-like, Keshub is bound to rise again from his ashes,—all those calumnies and evil prophesies notwithstanding! In the words of Sankaracharya—

"When the cloud covers his own eyesight, the fool thinks that the cloud covers the sun."

Miss Collet was credited by the Protestors with greater love for the Brahmo Somaj than the Theists themselves, than either Miss Cobbe or Mr. Voysey or even the great scholar Max Muller of Oxford I ask why? What was she to the Brahmo Somaj or the Brahmo Somaj to her that she should meddle with its affairs? Would Pt Shastri or any of his colleagues be allowed to meddle in the affairs of Miss Collet's community? Where Brahmos quarrel on points of Brahmo principle or practice, a high class Hindu even if he be a member (be it said to his credit) would keep himself aloof One really wonders why the Protestors should allow Miss Collet, rather than the Rev Mr Voysey or Miss Cobbe, to actively participate in affairs which concern the Theists only Let any one who enjoyed the confidence of that lady or of those Protest leaders answer

Taking all things into consideration, I should think that Miss Collet and Miss Manning acting under the guidance of their Indian mentors, really found it quite easy to create havoc among the Unitarian and Theistic friends and admirers of Keshub, for the Unitarians as a body were themselves growing somewhat deistical, and were losing the firm faith and the fervent devotion,[1] which characterized the Unitarians of the days of

[1] The reader will here excuse me a little personal reference In about 1888, while in England, I noticed a remarkable lack of devotional fervour among the English Unitarians and Theists, and many among them too felt it so deeply that in my preaching tours they often expressed to me the desire that the Brahmo Somaj would send out preachers to England, to preach to them the living truths of a living Theism, for the conversion of 'the heathen at home" Besides Cirencester and Bedford I preached upon invitation at Cheltenham, Gloucester, Stroud in Gloucestershire Boston in-Lincolnshire, and New Church, Heywood, Rochdale and Middleton in Manchester At the Leeds Conference of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, along with the representatives from other parts of the world, I too was given a public reception as the representative of the Brahmo Somaj in India

Channing and Priestley The stress Keshub laid on divine communion and inspiration was itself sufficient to shock and repel from him the more deistic among the Unitarians of England Add to this, Keshub was *nationalizing the Universal Theism of the Brahmo Somaj* The Unitarians are Christians and Englishmen Many of them expected to see India Christianized or at least anglicized, and in that line of work the protesting leaders rendered them valuable help Indeed I have been shocked to see the attempt to denationalize our people's manners, carried to such extremes, that the Protest leaders themselves perhaps never dreamt of So early as 1869, Keshub in his Lecture on '*The Future Church*," had said —

> ' All mankind will unite in a Universal Church, at the same time it will be adapted to the peculiar circumstances of each nation and assume a national form." [1]

This bold statement of a new principle of Theism, almost paradoxical, could not but sound as an 'extravagant pretension' to the deistic section of the Unitarians. To this when Keshub added,—

> "The diplomatic divinity who makes for his people comfortable homes, where truth and mammon may both be served in a convenient fashion, is certainly different from the uncompromising King who would not be satisfied with anything short of absolute self-surrender " [2]

It sounded all the world over, and some of the Unitarians, we find, went into hysterics against Keshub, one of them writing of him, in the London " Inquirer," "as a man going down the path of moral and spiritual infatuation under the influence of extravagant pretensions." [3]

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, The Future Church, p 105.
[2] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol II, p 239
[3] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol II, p. 224.

Indeed the Cooch Behar Controversy merely represents the first instalment of that war which has to be fought out in the future in which the contending parties in the Brahmo Somaj will not be the Sadharan or the Navavidhan Somajes (for that is a puerile cross-division in which the classes overlap), but true Theists as against Deists in the Somaj who would say 'God never spoke to me,' whose religion is a human thing whose source and authority are altogether human That is to be the war of the future which our Minister foresaw with a prophet's eye when he said —"Sooner or later Theism must plunge into a desperate and deadly war with Deism" against which true Theists should combine and prepare themselves [1]

Inspiration, Moral and "Immoral!"

What Keshub's ideas about Inspiration were in 1866, we have shown by taking extracts from his Lecture on *Great Men* What his ideas were in 1881, about two years before his ascension, the reader will judge from the following —

> "Daily does God speak to each one of us, not to saints and prophets only, but to the least among us" .. True solitude is the solitude of the heart There far away from the world's noise, the devotee may always enjoy sweet and undisturbed communion with Infinite Love" [2]

Keshub concluded his Town Hall lecture "We Apostles of the New Dispensation" with the words,—

> "Heed not the voice of evil counsellors seek wisdom in Inspiration"

When sending out the Apostles of the New Dispensation in 1881, Keshub thus addressed them :—

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation Vol I p 284
[2] Keshub's New Dispensation Vol I, p 103 and pp 133, 134.

"You are not my disciples you are my friends my valued co-adjutors. Do not imitate me Imitation is death, it is blind obedience, it is slavery May my Father be your teacher and guide. Let no one regard me as his *guru* Whatever I say whether it be true or not ascertain it by appealing to the spirit of God Accept or reject it according to the spirit of God "[1]

It shows that even to the last Keshub never put forth any 'extravagant pretensions,' as his opponents alleged, he did Whatever he says may be 'true or not. and his followers are to accept or reject as the spirit of God directs them

It appears that the Protest leaders, when they drafted their "Statement for a separate organization" to which we have referred, presented a change of front Their *open* opposition, to what they called the "most obnoxious doctrines," they had to abandon When they had transferred the theatre of their polemics to England, and made a common cause with Miss Collet, they no longer stigmatize those three doctrines together in that general way as "most obnoxious" They limit the depth of their hostility to the living Theism, *i.e.*, our Brahmo faith in a living and ever-acting intra-cosmic God, in order to extend the superficies of their hostility They limit their attack solely to the doctrine of Inspiration, and that too in a very veiled way, confining themselves to *Keshub's doctrine of Inspiration which they purposely mis state* Their opposition is further modified, probably under the lawyer's chisel, so as to do a double duty,—like the quibbles common in our law courts, first to serve as a covert attack on the doctrine of Divine Inspiration itself, but without rousing the suspicions or wounding the feelings of their two great allies,—Miss Collet of the Trinitarian Communion, and Maharshi of the Adi Somaj, and at the same time

[1] Mozoomdar's Life and Teachings of Keshub, p. 242.

to serve also as a personal slander on Keshub's moral principles. Miss Collet had stigmatized Keshub's inspiration, as "deification" of a blind impulse, at variance with the laws of *morality* and reason."—without caring to enter into facts to prove the immorality of Keshub's inspiration. Indeed, to do so, would at once show that she was falsifying facts, and as an expert lawyer of Dacca once put it, she was 'manufacturing truth"

The Protest leaders, too, as if taking their cue from Miss Collet oppose Keshub's doctrine of Divine Inspiration saying —

> "We consider it to be a blasphemy and an insult to the Majesty of Heaven to claim Divine Inspiration for any act opposed to the dictates of reason, truth and morality."[1]

Notice the innuendo contained in the concluding words, "opposed to the dictates of reason, truth and morality," —the sting is at the tail end of these self-constituted guardians of the world's reason, truth and morality. It has the stinking odour of "the leading questions" of expert lawyers at the cross-examination of their witnesses. The Lamb of Lily Cottage, they knew well, would not retaliate, so that any one could vilify him to his heart's content, with impunity Was all this relevant? I ask, was it relevant to speak of Keshub's doctrines of Universal Inspiration being opposed to "the dictates of reason, truth and morality?" As regards the charge of Keshub's doctrine of Inspiration being opposed to the dictates of reason I shall barely add that when one man's conclusions of reasons are often known to be opposed[2] to another's, they may also well

[1] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol I, Appendix p LVII

[2] From Newman's Apologia—Froude's Short Studies' p 347 — "Reason is the faculty which finds reasons for what we wish to believe, and the saying is true in so far as it implies that there are in every human being emotional and mental tendencies which suggest the premises of arguments, dispose the lights and shadows in which

be opposed to another man's inspiration, so that one man's inspiration, in the same way as his conclusions of reason, may well clash with the conclusions from reasoning of another man. Was it that to hoodwink the Maharshi, *instead of impugning the doctrine of inspiration generally as they used to do hitherto, they insinuated that Keshub had set up a new doctrine of inspiration* at variance with that of the Maharshi, and that it was that new doctrine of Keshub which they slanderously stigmatized as 'unreasonable, untrue and immoral?'

Did Keshub ever claim for himself the privilege of Divine Inspiration, for saying or doing anything untrue or immoral? Keshub defending or doing anything immoral, either connected with himself or any body else! The man of whom the Maharshi (for whom these leaders professed so much lip-devotion) testified saying:—

> "In my life I have not seen in all Bengal a purer or a greater character."

—and that at a time of life when Keshub and Maharshi were engaged in a deadly conflict with each other, on a most important point of Brahmo principle,—that dearly beloved one of the Maharshi was accused by a band of diplomatic theists of countenancing immorality? Who taught true morality to Bengal, pray? Let Mr Shastri answer. Was it Rammohun Roy, certain questionable things in whose life even his biographer Nagendranath is constrained to refer to (see p 435)? Was it the Maharshi? He was too much of a *yogin* to trouble himself about the moral conduct of other people It was Keshub. In answer to the question "Why is the Minister Unpopular?" Keshub, somewhat in the style of Socrates, in Plato's "Apologia Socratica," rightly

external facts shall appear and make conclusions appear to one person to be satisfactorily made out when to another they shall seem resting upon air"

says, "Because he is always raising the standard of religion and morality higher and higher" If Keshub had suffered the standard of morality to be lowered in the Brahmo Somaj, and in the Bharat Asram, he might have had, at his side Pundit Shastri, a poet-preacher as a devoted disciple If in the early days of the *Bharatvarshiya* Somaj, Keshub could only have got over the fear, that to denationalize the manners of a people, not yet well-grounded in the very stiff rules of etiquette prevailing in European polite society, would open the flood-gates of immorality and corruption, he might have had to the last Mr Durgamohan Das, the social reformer on European lines at his side, as a stalwart champion defending him, in the Cooch Behar Marriage affair, from the spite (proceeding out of wounded vanity) of that old class-fellow of Durga Mohan's, Dewan Kalikadas Datta If he only had a little of that spirit of compromise, a little of that faith in mere "unity and solidarity," which characterized and still characterizes his opponents of the school of expediency, he could at the very outset have cut off the ground from under the feet of the protestors. Keshub such as he was, the Prometheus who first brought to us in Bengal, the fire of true morality from Heaven, whom the protestors pretended to call their leader, whose example, they pretended might affect the Brahmo public, is accused of supporting immorality by Divine Command! Oh, the irony of it!

The Point at Issue

But are we bound to be satisfied with the Protest leaders' *Ipse Dixit* that Keshub's inspiration was immoral? What was that '*particular* inspiration, let us first enquire, to which they object? The Protest Secretary is too proud to particularize it. Pundit Shastri, too, does not mention it citing the particulars. We

therefore turn to the Revered Bhai Girish Ch Sen's account.—

> "The Minister Keshub Chunder Sen first disapproved of the marriage proposal brought by Sj Jadav Ch Chakravarti of the Cooch Behar Raj Afterwards when he received these assurances (against idolatrous rites, etc) from the Deputy Commissioner (Mr Dalton), the Minister realized that the sacred will of God was in it, and then without yet giving full consent, he said—the proposal may be proceeded with... The Minister did not himself go out to look for this bridegroom for his own daughter, rather when the proposal first came to him he twice or thrice expressed indifference, and even disapproval, still did the proposal come up again and again from the Government, that made him realize clearly the command of God in the matter"[1]

This then was Keshub's much-maligned *Adesh* or Divine Command THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OR COMMAND WAS MERELY THIS.—"THE SACRED WILL OF GOD WAS IN THE MARRIAGE PROPOSAL," OR "KESHUB REALIZED CLEARLY THE COMMAND OF GOD IN THE MATTER OF THE MARRIAGE PROPOSAL" NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS THAN THIS What is there in it, pray that could be stigmatized as 'opposed to the dictates of morality, or that it could be called "immoral?' Did the protestors refer to the fact that Keshub's daughter fell short of fourteen years (the minimum required by the Civil Marriage Act III, of 1872) by six months? Is that Civil Marriage Act (not even a Brahmo Marriage Act, for which Keshub moved heaven and earth on our behalf, and was on the point of gaining his object when the Adi Somaj defeated all our hopes) meant more for Deists than for Theists to fix our standard of morality? Are marriages under fourteen to be reckoned immoral? Were the Brahmo marriages celebrated before 1872—and there

[1] G Roy's *Acharya* Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Part V, p 904 ff.

were several—immoral? On the contrary Keshub had entered into a contract with a Christian Government which was bound to see and did see that the parties were separated immediately after the formal ceremony, so that the so-called marriage was practically a betrothal with the formalities of a marriage, the consummation of marriage taking place two or three years later Again, we ask, are Hindu child-marriages immoral? Are the Protest leaders themselves, the offspring of "immoral" marriages, being as they are the offspring of Hindu child-marriage? It would be nothing to Miss Collet to think so, but would the Protest leaders cut their own noses to please Miss Collet and spite Keshub Chunder?

But would the reader please reflect —The Divine Inspiration or Divine Command (Adesh) that Keshub received and to which the Protestors seem to refer was no more than this,—"The sacred will of God was in the marriage proposal, or that Keshub realized clearly the command of God in the matter of that proposal" KESHUB NEVER SAID, AND NO ONE ON HIS PART EVER CONTENDED THAT THAT DIVINE COMMAND ALSO FIXED, THEN AND THERE, THE TIME TO-DAY, TO-MORROW, OR TWO YEARS AFTER, OR THE RITES AND CEREMONIES, OR ANY OTHER DETAILS EITHER BRAHMO. OR BRAHMO AND HINDU MIXED—AS THE PROTEST LEADERS ALWAYS SEEM TO IMPLY Although Keshub always sought for the Divine light within him for his guidance, no one alleges that all the details were regulated, (specially what depended on the other party) by reference to Keshub's inner light The time of marriage, and the forms and ceremonies of marriage, were settled later on by Keshub and his friends guided by their inner light, in consultation with the Government and agents of the Raj With regard to anything irregular or open to objection in those details, you may blame Keshub personally to your heart's content, *but it*

is the very height of human perversity to ascribe it to the Divine command that Keshub received That was just what the Protest leaders did The imperfections connected with those details, the Protest leaders ascribed to the Divine command. Keshub says explicitly .—

> "I give every one the liberty to dislike and condemn what in me is personal, private and liable to error, and to wrong" [1] I have a higher self and a lower self and I see clearly the line of demarcation between the two" [2]

Again and again did Keshub express regret [3] for the imperfections of his daughter's marriage and never for a moment did he condone them as having taken place under a divine command. I ask the reader to judge of Keshub's position from the following taken from *The Brahmo Public Opinion*, of March 21, 1878 :—

> "The bridegroom's (Maharaja's) side insisted on having the marriage solemnized according to Hindu rites, your Minister persisting in having Brahmo rites He ordered the things to be packed up and said he would rather go back to Calcutta with his daughter than yield to idolatrous rites Little did he think that it was too late to do anything of the kind. He was in the lion's den His daughter was then in the Rajbari wherefrom he could not possibly get her back Permission, however, was given him to go back, but he was called upon to pay a lac and fifty thousand rupees down for the expenses already incurred on account of the marriage."

Who that has a heart would, after this unmistakable admission by the B P O.—the worst of Keshub's opponents, find fault with Keshub ? Yet do the Protest leaders, pre-eminently Miss Collet in England, and the Protest Secretary Shiv Chandra Dev, here proclaim that Keshub made use of God's will merely as a scapegoat

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol II, p. 56
[2] Keshub's Town Hall Lecture, "Am I an Inspired Prophet" p 237.
[3] G. G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol 5 p 937

to save his own skin, and that he used Inspiration as a cloak for indirectly countenancing "child-marriage, caste and idolatry" Are they not thus guilty of the grossest and meanest perversion of facts, to create capital against Keshub ?

The Charge of Indirectly Sanctioning Idolatry

In 1882, Keshub said in his Jeevan Veda :—

> "As the idea of freedom became developed, I began to see that idolatry and caste were lording it over us; I tried, as soon as I saw to break their fetters Century after century the country lay enchained in idolatry, ... and I lifted my sword to cut them down "[1]

Secretary Shiv Chandra Dev accused Keshub of countenancing idolatry and caste, saying :—"Did you not indirectly sanction idolatry by allowing, etc .." He went further and added insult to injury by falsely accusing Keshub of upholding the idea of "God indirectly sanctioning an early marriage with idolatrous rites."[2] "God indirectly sanctioning," what an expression ! The expression 'indirectly' is altogether inadmissible in Keshub's vocabulary of inspiration —

> "The moment you put your fingers in contact with fire," says Keshub, 'you instantly feel a burning sensation So with prayer and the consequent inspiration. The effect is immediate, necessary and inevitable "[3]
>
> "Here we see no appeal to reason or public opinion, no calculation of profit and loss according to the arithmetic of expediency, no reference to consequences."[4]

It would be a foolish lie, therefore, to ascribe such a notion to Keshub to whom God's sanction is a direct or immediate perception and not an indirect or immediate

[1] Chapter V, *Suadhinata*
[2] Pt Shastri s H B S Vol I, Appendix K, LXVIII.
[3] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Inspiration," p. 116.
[4] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Great Men," p. 59.

inference. The expression 'God *indirectly* sanctioning' at once shows the cloven foot of the Benthamite Deist, thrust into the camp of true theism,—for to the true Theist all God's commands come in the form of "Thou shalt," and they come directly. God never sanctions by ratiocination or syllogising To ascribe such a doctrine to Keshub and then to vilify it, is first to create a charge against him, and then declare him guilty on that charge Is it not another instance of the Protest leaders' skill in manufacturing truth to order? If it is indirect it is human, and if there is anything wrong in it, it is the individual who is responsible and not God In the same way, as Secretary Shiv Chandra accused Keshub of indirectly sanctioning caste, he might, if he chose, have accused Keshub, of 'indirectly sanctioning' idolatry, but that too though preferable to an open blasphemy, would be but a convenient lawyer's quibble, in any case let him not utter blasphemy, nor accuse another of uttering blasphemy

One thing is clear even Keshub's chief vilifier, Pt Shastri himself shrinks from saying that Keshub personally or directly did anything that could be called 'countenancing idolatry or caste" 'Sanctioning idolatry or caste indirectly!' That may mean anything or nothing You send money every month to your orthodox Hindu parents for their maintenance, and they make a small saving every month out of it, and with what they thus collect together in the whole year, they celebrate Durga Puja. Such cases are extremely common among even *anusthanic* Brahmos. You send the money for their maintenance with the full knowledge of the use they make of it Do you thereby *indirectly* sanction their idolatry and caste? No, you cannot be responsible for what you cannot control. Nor can you make Keshub responsible for what he could not control. As it is your duty to maintain your parents, so was it Keshub's duty to obey the Divine command regarding

his daughter to give her in marriage to the man after her heart and no one else. "The day," says Bhai Gour Govinda, "under the promised assurance given by the (Christian) Government and after prayer (to God), he allowed the bridegroom and the bride to interview each other, that very day he knew that his daughter was practically married to the Maharajah of Cooch Behar. He cannot make over this bride to another bridegroom" [1]

Again, take the case of Mr Sen's daughter whom the Protest leaders falsely represented as gone through the Hindu ceremony of expiation, and with Mr. Sen's knowledge and approval Says the *Brahmo Public Opinion* [2] —

> "Who elated with joy ...actually sanctioned, would our European readers believe it,—the expiation of his daughter."

Does the reader understand the beauty of the Protest leaders' appeal to his European readers,'—an appeal also paraded by Pt Shastri in these words —"It must have struck many an English reader of our Brahmo journal" [3] Does he believe there were a large number of such readers ? Are they to be the judge of our Hindu ceremony of expiation ? Does it not sound like appealing to the judgment of the *Kazi* (Mahomedan priest) about the Durga Puja ? It is simply bluff, perhaps intended to impress Miss Collet, their English advocate. However, we turn to Bhai G G Roy's book for facts, where it is said —

> "In that crowd one came and touched her (Sunity Devi) hand with a guinea, and went away with it She could not then understand what each one did, and with what object At once the intriguers gave publicity to her

1 G G Roy's "Acharya Keshub Chandra," *Madhya*, part V, p 919
2 "Brahmo Public Opinion," 21st March, 1878
3 Pt. Shastri's "New Dispensation and The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, p 62

touch of the guinea, as the expiation. She knew nothing. she did not herself touch it A woman rather made the guinea touch her person, and took it away."[1]

As for Mr. Sen having a knowledge of, or of sanctioning any expiation of his daughter, it is evidently an invention of the Protest leader's brain An honest and unbiassed judge, concluding from the facts before him would not think that even Sunity Devi, directly or indirectly, sanctioned the so-called expiation Indeed from the day that Mr. and Mrs Sen openly identified themselves with the Tagore family (of Pirili Brahmins), in 1857, the Hindu ceremony of expiation became as much out of place in regard to their daughter, as it would be in the case of Miss Sophia, daughter of our Kazi Shaheb, or a daughter of Jalal Mia of the Dacca *Sangat* of old Even if anything happened in that line,—and we know that nothing did happen—any unbiassed judge would look upon it, as mere meaningless child's play, necessary for giving the marriage, which must take place, the due formalities of the law. Again, if you allow a free and unlimited scope to the Protest leaders' charge, if you allow a free scope to the charge of indirect sanction, you can hold any man responsible for anything Did not Mill say that since God created man with the fore-knowledge that man would commit sin therefore God indirectly sanctioned sin? After all, who made Shiv Ch Dev or Shiv N. Shastri a judge over Keshub?

But let us take a particular case regarding another Brahmo minister, that will drive the point home. About three months ago (January, 1917—this article appearing on March 8) Pt. Shastri told us at a small meeting that when he was lying bed-ridden and very ill, at the request of his mother, drank the sacred *charanamrita* or water touched by the Brahmin's toe, and that

[1] G G. Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, part V, p. 920-21.

he also allowed his mother to perform other idolatrous rites on his person, and that she also gave him a *maduli* or amulet containing her mystic Hindu *Vijamantra* to wear round his loins. Not that I should wish anyone to take serious notice of such trifles, but I ask the reader only to consider whether our Protest leader, Pt. Shastri, is also himself not guilty of countenancing idolatry and caste, and much more guilty than Keshub, who, I have shown, expressed regret again and again, for many things wrong that took place without his knowledge or sanction, at the marriage of his daughter, while Pt. Shastri told it all, most brazenfacedly, and without the least sign of shame or regret, and for ought we know he is still desecrating the pulpit of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, by carrying thereon that *maduli*, the symbol of idolatry and superstition. Not that there is any harm in one's trying to humour his aged mother, by a petty compliance, but it is outrageous when people who freely swallow camels, when they are themselves interested, strained at any imaginary gnat, when Keshub was concerned To see those very people pillory Keshub on the score of such trifles is indeed a sight to make 'angels weep'

The Charge of Countenancing Caste

Again, in discussing the Protest Secretary's accusation, that Keshub indirectly countenanced caste, we have first to remark that caste is the true pillar on which rests the fabric of Hindu idolatry Who would care to keep it up in these days if not for the sake of the privileges and emoluments of caste? Idolatry without caste would be more or less a matter of antiquarian interest, either as symbolical of something spiritual, or a meaningless child's play in which our ancestors took delight, or perhaps as a little Brahmo girl once said, looking upon the figure of Durga in

her uncle's house. "My uncle plays with such big dolls!" Indeed ordinary Hindu idolatry without caste, might be something as harmless as the cobra, without her fangs, something to entertain our friends with Caste is indeed the true venom of Hindu idolatry Now, I ask again, who first taught us to renounce caste in the true sense? Not Rammohun, for he carried the sacred thread on his person to the end Not Maharshi, who in 1872, himself officiating as minister, invested his son with the sacred thread It was the efforts of Keshub, and his then lieutenant Pt. Bijoy Krishna, in the *Sangat*, which first brought about, in the Brahmo Somaj, "the renouncing of the *Upavita* or the sacred thread", in 1865, Devendra Nath himself following the lead rather than being the leader, in this *matter of Keshub and Bejoy* It is now this Keshub whom the Protest Secretary, on our behalf, has the effrontery to accuse of countenancing caste To the end of his life Keshub condemned idolatry and caste. In his "*We Apostles of the New Dispensation*," in 1881, three years after the Cooch Behar Marriage, Keshub condemns "the tyranny of caste, the reign of grim idolatry." Latterly in his *Jeevan Veda*, Keshub says "What endless superstitions like caste, etc. reigned in this country! .. How often has my heart bled saying —"Where is Gouranga, where is his love,—not bound within the four walls of caste?" And this Keshub is accused of indirectly 'sanctioning' caste distinctions The man who at the command of God, could lay the axe at the very root of Hindu idolatry and caste by consenting to give his daughter in marriage to a Prince of Cooch Behar, thereby in the orthodox Hindu's estimation openly discarding caste, is, by our perversity, accused of sanctioning caste and idolatry! As well might they have accused Justice Norris to have indirectly sanctioned Hindu idolatry and caste, when he summoned to his court the Hindu priest

to appear with the *Shalgram*, which subsequently led to the imprisonment of a distinguished public leader and editor of Bengal. At the Cooch Behar Marriage the cry ought rather to have been raised by the Hindus, for the violation of the sanctity of their idolatry and caste, as was done by them in the Norris-Shalgram affair. The long-suffering Hindu raised no such outcry. Nor, on the other hand, like Keshub's fellow-theists, did his fellow-Christians accuse Justice Norris of indirectly sanctioning idolatry and caste! Rather our malice, the malice of some of Keshub's fellow-theists, out of such a trifle, made capital against Keshub personally.

If we were honest and unbiased, we should rather have admired and looked on with wonder at the great sacrifice Keshub was making A Sen of Garifa, the grandson of the great Ramkamal Sen,—one of the jewels on the crown of the Vaidyas of Bengal, giving his daughter in marriage in a Cooch Behar family would be considered intolerable by any orthodox Hindu The orthodox Hindu would look upon a Cooch as of the same class as a Tipra, a Mag, a Manipuri Some do indeed think that the Princes of Cooch Behar like those of Hill Tipperah, are Kshatriyas by blood. But to the ordinary Hindu, be they princes or whatever else is higher, they are outside the pale of Hindu caste[1] People ignorant of the Hindu castes, like Miss Collet, might talk of Keshub being 'dazzled by the splendour" of a Maharajah, though even Miss Collet would have thought thrice, before bringing such a charge, if she knew of the difference in status *in the estimation of the home-abiding Hindu of the time.* As for those Pharisees

[1] I remember what a sensation was created in Eastern Bengal in the eighties, when a Maharajah of Hill Tipperah entertained the idea of seeing the water touched by himself made drinkable to ordinary Hindus! In that attempt we know money in the form of bribes to Pundits and heads of parties, flowed like water, yet the movement proved a failure

among our Protest leaders, who slandered Keshub I would tell them something of what I know personally in 1877. When the Cooch Behar agents were on the look out for a bride for their Prince, I was a teacher in the Banga Mahila Vidyalaya of Messrs A M. Bose and D M Das, and then I learnt that those agents had approached the guardians of one of my pupils with the proposal My information is that they would not hear of it Now let the reader only imagine, how such a proposal would be received in the family, and among the relations of the illustrious Ramkamal Sen. Say what the Protest leaders would of, "Babu K. C Sen having fallen into a great mistake"[1] *Keshub could not have given his consent to such a marriage proposal, could not have made the sacrifice it entailed, except under a Divine command revealed in his heart of hearts.* Truly did Keshub say —"The Divine command is not based on a calculation of results—the Lord commands 'Do it', and his faithful servant obeys"[2] Indeed it is something that Pt. Shastri can now, after the lapse of thirty years, muster courage enough to say —"The protesters never questioned the sincerity of Mr Sen's declaration that he acted from what he considered to be a Divine command", though the 'Brahmo Public Opinion" of 29th May, 1879, spoke of Keshub as the man "Who concocts the doctrine of *Adesh* (Divine command), to get over the marriage difficulties" Pt Shastri admittedly writes his "History" in the interest of his party,—"to record our version of the story"[3] as he openly states. Such a partisan of a historian is incapable of appreciating the lofty grandeur of Keshub's martyrdom in the Cooch Behar affair!

To revert again to Secretary Shiv Chandra's charge against Keshub, that of "God indirectly sanctioning an

[1] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol I, p 289
[2] G G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Part V, p 912.
[3] Pt Shastri's H B. S. Vol 1, Preface, p. VI.

early marriage with idolatrous rites" That word 'indirectly' connected with God's sanction is an attempt to manufacture a charge against Keshub by distorting his doctrine of inspiration. For Keshub repeatedly said—"To each man, saint or sinner, the Holy Spirit speaks directly as the "Indwelling Teacher."[1] As regards Keshub's sanctioning idolatry or caste *which only concerned the Hindu alone, one would like to ask, whether any Hindu would take Keshub's sanction as valid, on a point of Hindu idolatry or caste Any Hindu would tell you that even before the Cooch Behar Marriage, Keshub stood on the level of a Christian or of a Mahomedan, as regards Hinduism*, so that it is absurd to talk of Keshub's sanction of Hindu idolatry or caste The charge is, therefore, extremely frivolous, and after the general apology submitted by Keshub for the imperfections of his daughter's marriage, no gentleman could have anything to say against him

Next, I would ask the reader, if by tolerating the presence of a thread-bearing Brahmin at the scene of marriage, to repeat only such mantras as were approved by the semi-Mahomedan Pt G. G Roy,[2] Keshub can be accused of indirectly countenancing idolatry and caste. Remembering that in the opinion of the Brahmo Somaj from its very foundation, particularly of its grandfather, Raja Rammohun Ray, *Trinitarian Christians with their doctrine of Divine Incarnation, stood on the level of the Hindu idolator*,[3] let the reader judge

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Behold the Light of Heaven in India," p 139

[2] "I well remember the words of the distinguished Moulvi of Hosangabad, who himself described to me about 1892 the incident at Hosangabad, when in speaking of a contemplated controversy with Pt G G Roy he had to call him a Mahomedan,— '*Yea to Mussalmein har usse hum keya lare*"—He is a Mahomedan what am I to argue with him ?"

[3] *Vide* Rammohun Roy's letter in the pseudonym of *Ram Chundra* inviting Trinitarian Christians on behalf of Hindu idolators—making idolatry and man-worship as their common ground—to make common cause against Rammohun

whether the protesters in making a common cause with Miss Collet, who was a Trinitarian of the Church of England, were not also themselves guilty of countenancing idolatry. Again, remembering the difference of doctrine as regards the sacred thread, between ourselves and the Adi Somaj Brahmos who (while maintaining the sanctity of the Hindu sacred thread and caste could at the same time call themselves Brahmos, the same as ourselves) could wreck our Brahmo Marriage Bill of 1872, forcing us to have recourse to a godless Civil Marriage Act, as our only resource, and that at a moment when, through the patient and self-sacrificing labours of Keshub, the Bill was on the point of becoming law,—I ask the reader to consider whether the Protest leaders by throwing themselves in the arms of the Adi Somaj and offering their pulpit to the Maharshi, were not themselves guilty of 'sanctioning caste and idolatry' not indirectly, but directly and deliberately, in order to ensure the success of their Protest movement, and effect an easy overthrow of Keshub? The organ of the Protest leaders *The Brahmo Public Opinion* of Dec. 12, 1878, as we noticed before, went so far as to say.—"In point of fact we differ less from our friends of the Adi Somaj, than those of the Brahmo Somaj of India",—and that too from the date of the Cooch Behar Marriage Does it not show that they would go any length to effect the discomfiture of Keshub? They would even cut their own nose to spite him throwing the blame on him

Idolatry and the Brahmo Somaj

Was Keshub guilty of encouraging idolatry? There is no doubt that at one time,—especially at the Proclamation of Keshub's New Dispensation,—with the *Welcoming of the Flag* (*Nishan Varan*), and his performance of the *Homa* and *Baptism*, etc., we thought he was

lapsing into or encouraging idolatry,—idolatry in the loose sense in which we used the word in the seventies. We sometimes even thought it idolatrous in those days to use the name *Hari* for God, because of its close association with Sri Krishna in Chaitanya's time I remember in 1877, when we were living at 93 College Street,—the seed-bed of the Protest movement,—there was among us a disciple of Pt. Dayananda Saraswati with Brahmo sympathies. He and I often came home together on Sundays from the Brahma Mandir, and on our way he used to express a feeling of deep indignation and annoyance at our use of the name of *Hari* for God in the Brahmo Somaj, which was then just beginning to use *Harinama* The dislike for the name of *Hari* was so great among us, that Mr Shastri in his "*Brahmo Somaj and Navavidhan*" has made it one of his grounds of accusation against Keshub, as encouraging idolatry To what ridiculous excess we carried our hatred of idolatry will be shown from the following. A resolution forbidding the use of the name of *Hari* in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj was passed, compelling Pt Bijoy Krishna to give up his preaching On the Sunday following the passing of the resolution, some one in the choir, not aware of the resolution, began singing that proscribed hymn with the name of *Hari*, another of the choir at once pressing the singer's lips with the palm of his hand began singing another hymn. Again, there was a *Kadamba* tree in those days standing near a corner of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj. The *Kadamba* is very closely associated with the amorous myths about Krishna and Radha I remember a Brahmo friend amusing us with the proposal that the Kadamba tree being a symbol of idolatry and bad taste should be cut down In these days the pendulum of the Sadharan Somaj has begun to swing in the opposite direction, so that it is now in danger of running to the opposite extreme. The virus of *Kartabhaja*—man-

worship—once found a very suitable *nidus* in the Sadharan Somaj. Pt Tattwabhushan himself says :—

> "Some of us, not a very small number,—a good few,—many of them serving as ministers of the Somaj, many still serving went to a man of the old school of *yoga*, to learn the methods of *yoga*—the old method specially that of *hatha yoga* of which *pranayama* (regulation of breath) is the chief feature."[1]

To avoid our swinging like the pendulum between two opposite extremes, to avoid our reeling like inebriates to and fro, it is necessary for us Brahmos to have a rational conception of what idolatry truly is what it is that we really wish to accuse the Hindus of, and what it is that we accused Keshub to have countenanced ? What is idolatry ? Speaking of the Hindu mind Keshub says "In all things it breaks open the outer form and tries to seize the kernel of spirit within !"[2] What is Hindu idolatry ? To answer the question the reader will excuse me if I place before him the following extract from Max Muller's ' The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy," in which he thus quotes with approval from an essay of mine entitled—"*Shankarachariya and Vedanta*" — 'In this sense (*i e* , as connected with the lower knowledge and *Karma Kanda*) it has been truly said that Shankara did not attack or destroy idolatry On this point I may quote the words of a living Vedantist, Dwijadas Datta, in his Lecture on Vedanta, p 12 —

> "It is certain," he says, that Shankara was opposed to the abuse of ritualism, and though he did not cut off all connection with idolatry, he tried to introduce the right spirit of idolatry Idolatry in the sense of religious symbolism ;—and I believe the most orthodox Hindus would take this view—cannot be open to objection

[1] Pt Sitanath's—"Spiritual History of the Brahmo Somaj," p. 26
[2] Keshub's **Lectures in India, "Behold the Light of Heaven in India,'** p 138

Symbolism there must be, whether in words or things. Verbal symbols appeal to the ear, and the symbols of things to eye, and that is all the difference between them. Verbal symbolism is language Who would object to the use of language in religion ? But if the one is allowed why should not also the other ? To my mind idolatry, apart from its attendant corruptions, is a religious algebra And if verbal symbols, without the spirit or in a corrupted spirit, are (be) not objectionable (but are they not ?—M M), so, and to the same extent, formal symbols or stocks and stones are also unobjectionable At one stage of its spiritual growth, idolatry is a necessity of our nature The tender seed of a religious spirit requires to be carefully preserved in a soft coating of symbols, till it has acquired the strength to resist the nipping frost of worldliness and scepticism. ..When the religious spirit is mature symbols are either given up or suffered to remain from their harmlessness . .Shankara did bow to idols, sometimes as symbols of the Great Infinite, sometimes as symbols of lower orders of beings in whom he believed....These lower orders of divine beings Vishnu, Indra, Yama, etc.. in whom he believed, are *phenomenal*, and subject to creation and dissolution, as much as ourselves."

For the edification of the more deistically disposed among our brethren of the Brahmo Somaj who I hope in their zeal for the overthrow of Keshub, would not be disposed to out-Bain Bain himself, I take the following from Bain's 'Mental and Moral Science':—"The emotions may spread themselves over collateral and indifferent objects... Hence tokens of friendship, formalities, language, reflect and magnify the feelings towards the main object of worship ; and the difficulty ever has been to keep them from wholly usurping by their sensuous facilities the place of the unseen Deity."[1] How solemn and delightful was the impression upon my mind of that mulberry tree planted by Milton in Christ

[1] Bain's Mental and Moral Science, p. 104.

College, Cambridge, of which I brought a twig even to Calcutta as a most sacred memento. What was the charm of that little twig for me? It was the result of association of an indifferent thing with the sacred memory of the great Puritan poet It is similar with religious symbols.

The following remarks of Carlyle on the subject of idolatry, are also likely to be of interest to the reader —

> 'Idol is Eidolon, a thing seen, a symbol It is not God, but a symbol of God, and perhaps one may question whether the most benighted mortal ever took it for more than a symbol I fancy he did not think that the poor image his own hands had made *was* God, but that God was emblemed by it that God was in it some way or other And now in this sense one may ask Is not all worship whatsoever a worship by symbols, by *eidola*, or things seen? Whether seen rendered visible as an image or a picture to the bodily eye, or visible only to the inward eye, to the imagination, to the intellect this makes a superficial but no substantial difference It is still a Thing Seen significant of Godhead, an Idol ...All creeds liturgies, religious forms, conceptions that fitly invest religious feeling, are in this sense eidola things seen. All worship whatsoever must proceed by symbols, by idols We may say all idolatry is comparative and the worst idolatry is only more idolatrous....Souls are no longer filled with their Fetish but only pretend to be *filled* and would fain make themselves feel that they are filled.... Blamable idolatry is *cant*, and even what one may call sincere cant"[1]

Symbols and Symbolism

One thing at least will be clear from the above, that idolatry cannot be the monopoly of the Hindu, but that rightly judged we Brahmos may be as often guilty of it as

[1] Carlyle's Heroes and Hero-worship, Lecture IV.

the Hindu. I remember, in the eighties, I discussed the subject in a Bengali essay on "Who is the Idolater"?, or "Who is the thief, you or me?" *In what does true idolatry consist? Not certainly in the mere use of symbols for the Godhead, or of rituals in His worship, but in the abuse of symbols and rituals, that abuse may lie as much in the substitution of such impalpable symbols as abstract concepts and names,* as well as of such palpable symbols as things or stocks or stones, for the "Unseen Deity" they are meant to symbolize Idolatry is losing the end or main object of worship in the means of worship. It is the use of symbols ideal or verbal, formal, audible, visible or tangible,—"without the spirit" or in a 'corrupted spirit'. It is the "usurpation" by the associated ideal, or "sensuous" collateral and indifferent objects", of the place of the unseen object of worship. It should be remembered that our mere concept, or abstract idea of God or His attributes is not the percept or God Himself,—the Supreme Person, the Concrete Reality. There is thus an invisible or ideal idolatry (*Nirakara Puttalikata*) as bad as the visible or sensuous idolatry (*Sakar Puttalikata*) of which we so glibly accuse the Hindu Can we, then, say with truth that we Brahmos never encourage idolatry in some form or other? It is indeed our ideal but the practice of the Brahmo Somaj falls far below the ideal Indeed I remember our friend, the leading protester Mr D. M. Das, who was always, what they call, a jolly good fellow, having remarked of the Deity worshipped by the Brahmos:—"The Deity of the Brahmos and a Judge of the High Court are about alike Neither of them would understand you, if you say a thing only once" What does it mean? Mr Das charges the Brahmos with worshipping an abstraction of their understanding, or their idea of God, in the place of the true Omniscient Person, the Reader of the hearts of His worshippers He accuses us all of idolatry, and has good grounds for

this accusation. There can, therefore, be no meaning in singling out Keshub for an attack on a charge of indirectly countenancing idolatry.

Keshub, more than any other man in the Brahmo Somaj, was always on his guard against true idolatry, while he gave to symbols and rituals their proper place in a spiritual religion like our Brahmo religion, performing the national ceremony of *homa*, or what he calls "The New Homa Ceremony" Having lighted the fire, and pouring clarified butter over it, he addressd the fire saying:—

> "O Thou blessed *Agni*, great among the forces of creation, Thou art not God, we do not adore thee. But in thee dwells the Lord, the Eternal, Inextinguishable Flame, the Light of the universe, the Immanent Fire, Fire of fire, whom fire doth reveal and glorify O Thou resplendent God of fire as the fire before us burns these pieces of fuel, so shall we burn our anger and avarice, lust and pride and all our passions in the fire of Thy Holiness"[1]

The reader will here note how very cautious Keshub is lest any one should mistake him as supporting idolatry by allowing the symbol of worship to usurp the place of the object of worship,—the Invisible Deity

Again, in his much-maligned Flag ceremony, to obviate a similar mistake on the part of his congregation, he says —

> "The symbol like the outer shell will pass away in time It (the banner) represents the Church Militant, developing into the Church Triumphant A feeble emaciated faith trampled upon by every insignificant foe, and crouching timidly before ruling vice, we heartily despise The Omnipotent Lord of Hosts or no God at all A triumphant faith or no faith at all. . The whole thing was a grand symbol of royalty,—the Heavenly King enthroned,—and it foreshadowed His

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol. I., p 117

future kingdom on earth The true believers one after another, marched towards the flag of the Holy King, touched it, kissed it, and then reverently bowed before God, gave him their allegiance and homage and prayed "Thy Kingdom Come "[1]

With this let the good reader compare the caricature of the ceremony presented by Pt Shastri in his "New Dispensation and the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj." The reader will note the value of Shastri's observation,— "Mr. Sen himself fanned this banner *in the orthodox idolatrous fashion* with the *chamur* and kissed it; whilst many of the followers touched it as a mark of their fealty, and bowed *before it* (did they ?), although it has been said afterwards that in so doing they did not bow to the flag but to God "[2] (Compare Shastri's Bengali poem on Flag and Mandir) However, to Pt. Shastri, idolatry evidently consists in "the orthodox idolatrous fashion' *i.e* in the 'fashion," and not in the mistaken or corrupt spirit of substitution of the symbol of worship for the object of worship

Now with regard to the flag, allow me to note that when friends of different nationalities meet in a foreign country, and happen to talk each about his national flag, a non-Mahomedan Indian cannot but feel how very disgraceful it is, for his nation to be without a national flag,—though the stay-at-home among us may not have reason to feel so ashamed Some people may in the density of their ignorance speak of this as "the thoroughly childish argument "[3] but those who have 'foreign' experience will tell you that, among the civilized nations of the world, for any nation not to have a national flag is a mark of barbarism I had such bitter experiences, and had good reason to wish that I could call the flag of the New Dispensation

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol I, p 18.
[2] Pt Shastri's N D & S. B. S, p 55
[3] " " " " " p 55

our National Flag. Keshub has really supplied a great national want Would that our nation accepted it. Lastly in his "Baptismal Ceremony," Keshub says —

> "Sacred water, mighty expanse of seas and oceans and rivers, we glorify Thee' 'Lord of water, cleanse Thy poor servant, and purify my body and soul "[2]

Let the reader observe how Keshub, while giving the fullest scope to the use of helpful symbols and rituals in religion, carefully guards himself and the Somaj, from the charge of idolatry, or of encouraging idolatry directly or indirectly

Pt Shastri's *Hariṇama*-phobia

But let us now turn again to Pt Shastri. Pt. Shastri charges Keshub and his party with 'misappropriating' the 'forms and phraseology' of other sects, and with encouraging Hindu idolatry "on account of their free and frequent use of the name of *Hari* and other Hindu Gods "[3] He also charges Mr. Sen's *Homa*, etc. with being "half-way' to idolatry,"[4] remarking —"How their recently introduced ceremonies of Eucharist and Homa, Baptism, etc all tend to reduce Brahmoism into idolatry and ritualism "[5] He says —"From the very day of its foundation, the Brahmo Somaj has been consistent about one point—its protest against idolatry. It has ever preached the duty and necessity of *pure spiritual worship* of God " It is a common remark with intelligent idolators, that in bowing before the idol they do not worship it, but they worship God Who,

[1] Compare Mahatma Gandhi's National Flag (in 1922) Which of the two is more adapted to our national and international needs? Let the reader answer

[2] Keshub's N D, Vol I, p 127

[3] Shastri's N D & S B. S, p 48

[4] Shastri's N D & S B. S, p. 60.

[5] Shastri's N D & S B S, p 85.

as an Omnipresent Being, resides in it. Does Shastri mean by "spiritual worship" worship without the use of any symbols whatever? Public worship is impossible without the use of symbols. If ideal or verbal symbols are not necessarily inconsistent with spiritual worship, nor are visible and tangible symbols necessarily so. All classes of symbols properly selected and used, may 'reflect and magnify the feelings,' towards the unseen Deity "Alas! many of us," says Pt. Shastri, "have caused terrible misery to our friends and relatives for refusing to bend our necks to any material object." The worshippers he alludes to, he himself admits, "say they do not worship the idol," do not "bend their necks to any material object." What right has any one, then, to doubt their sincerity?

Pt Shastri's accusation of the 'misappropriation' by Keshub "of the forms and phraseology" of other sects, as if there is a monopoly admissible in their use, reminds me of the charge brought against the Brahmo Somaj by the Rev. Lal Bihari De, about 1865 To quote the words of Keshub —"It has been said that Parker and Newman and the Brahmo Somaj are guilty of stealing God's truths from the Bible and passing them off as their own," and my reply to Pt. Shastri would be almost in the same strain, "to run after the audacious miscreant, and if on examination those 'pilfered' or 'misappropriated' forms and phraseology are found to be helpful to our spiritual growth, to sentence the miscreant to be incarcerated in the Great Jail of Salvation."[1] Had what Pt Shastri calls 'Hindu Idolatry' a 'copyright' to the use of the name of *Hari*? If you remove the wool of names used by us and occurring "in the phraseology of other sects," little by little the whole blanket of our vocabulary will be gone If you go on

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, 'The Brahmo Somaj Vindicated," p 40

branding off word after word in this fashion, spiritual worship would become impossible. Even the word *Parameshwara* is open to objection, for it is a name of Siva-Parvati-Parameshwaran (Kalidasa). Pt Shastri accuses Mr Sen's *Homa* etc , as half-way to idolatry. What is meant by 'half-way ?' Is it idolatry or is it not ? There is no half-way. Is all symbolism idolatry ? Have symbols a place in the pure spiritual worship of God or have they not ? Are symbols at all admissible in pure spiritual worship ? If so, you cannot arbitrarily pass audible symbols, and symbols of abstract ideas or concepts, and declare out of court visible and tangible symbols only. Think of the law of association or what Bain says :—'of tokens of friendship' 'acquiring a deep hold of our affections' Does Pt Shastri mean to carry his rationalism even beyond Mill and Bain ?

Is the idol being merely a symbol our only objection against Hindu idolatry ? Take specific cases, such as the phallic symbol of Shiva—*Shiva lingam*, or *Krishna's Raslila*, not as an allegory but as a record of Krishna's personal conduct Is the connection of Hindu idolatry with caste, as well as its many objectionable suggestions by association, nothing ? Then indeed Pt Shastri made a mistake, for by becoming a Brahmo he cannot hope to rise, and no human being can ever hope to rise, above being benefited by the use of symbols and tokens in spiritual worship When in England, I was invited to conduct the Harvest Festival Service, at the Unitarian Church of New Church, in Manchester How solemn and sacred was the impression made upon my mind when I saw the whole Church decorated with all kinds of fruits and grains the sight of which in front of the pulpit at once suggested to me the sacred text "The Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Was it idolatry ? I thought the association with these visible and tangible symbols, the gifts of God's own

hand, made the Service exceptionally deep and heart-uplifting I had reason to think that the congregation too was deeply moved and filled with the spirit of devotion. I ask again, was this idolatry ? Poetry is Pt Shastri's *forte* would that he had ceased to meddle with the philosophy of religion !

But Pt. Shastri is not satisfied with accusing Mr. Sen only, but has an accusation against those members of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, who are less *deistical* than he ! He says "I must freely and candidly confess, that many of the present members of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, who formerly belonged to Mr. Sen's party and whose notions of piety were unconsciously moulded by their influence, are not yet altogether free from these erroneous conceptions It must have struck many an English reader of our Brahmo Journals, belonging to both parties that there is too much of the sentimental and mystical, and too little of the practical and philanthropic about them" How great is Pt. Shastri's solicitude for the good opinion of "English readers," specially of Miss Collet !

Intercaste and International Marriages

The ideal of the Brahmo Somaj, I mean at least, the progressive section of us, that separated itself from the Adi Somaj in 1865, is the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Universal Humanity, as against the ideal of a reformed Hindu community of the Adi Somaj Are we advancing towards the realization of that universal brotherhood or receding from it, or standing stationary ? The Adi Somaj ideal was more or less a Vedic, (national) ideal, ours an international ideal To be true to our ideal, we cannot confine ourselves to the consideration of the Hindu nation alone,[1] said Keshub, in his sermon

[1] *Vide* Sister Nivedita on "Indian Nationalism," in "Civic and National Ideals",—"Hinduism alone in its completeness can never

on "Catholicity" (*Udarata*), when the Act III of 1872 was passed —

> "The seed that is planted by this Act (III of 1872) to-day when future generations come to enjoy its flower and fruit, and a hundred years hence when historians discuss its results, then will be revealed its high value Our delight is that this seed has been planted by Brahmoism This will unify the Brahmo Somaj with all the most civilized nations of the world . . Brahmoism which is the handiwork of God alone, can it be kept confined in any small nation or in any country ? "[1]

No doubt in the settlement of marriages among us, even among the lions of the Somaj to-day, both in the Navavidhan as well as in the Sadharan Somaj, the Vaidya seeks for a Vaidya, the Brahmin for a Brahmin, and the Kayastha for a Kayastha. That rather shows that we are receding from our ideal It is painful to contemplate that our world-wide ideal of universal brotherhood, we are to-day trying to confine within the sheep-pen of the Hindu society Highly educated and respectable people who joined us from the washerman and other such castes, it is well-known, finding us much too willing to remain fettered by the Hindu rules of caste, left us The class of Mahomedan Brahmos like Jalaluddin Mia are becoming almost extinct Thus with us, to-day, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood is become a mere dream, a mere dead letter, and if everything rested with us, we would wash our hands quite clean of our world-wide Brahmic ideal. But "our children our angels are" Already international marriages with European Christians are becoming quite frequent among Brahmo students residing in England. Such marriages are contracted by Brahmo young men of othe denominations, Protestant or Roman Catholic As it

create a nationality, for it then tends to be dominated by the exclusiveness of the Brahmin caste, whose ideal is naturally and rightfully its central type"

[1] Keshub's *Acharyer Upadesh*, Vol. III, p. 97

stands, the forms and rites observed in such marriages are either entirely theistic, or Protestant or Roman Catholic,—the marriage customs and religious observances of the weaker of the two contracting parties, being altogether ignored, which does not seem to be sufficiently respectful to that party. It is much to be desired that a mingling of the forms and ceremonies of the different parties could be effected, and a golden mean found so as to suit both the parties. With the practical realization and the spread of the Brahmic ideal of Universal Brotherhood,—if it is not to remain a mere name, and a mere bait to catch dreamy young men unawares,—international and intercaste marriages between parties of different nationalities, or castes, or walks of life, such as the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878 are bound to be common events among Brahmos in India also In all these cases any question about Hindu idolatry or caste, is entirely out of place. The only material point in the forms of celebration of such marriages, is the legality of the marriage according to the laws of the country or state where the international marriage is celebrated Any rite or ceremony that comes within the legal minimum, and is not positively irreligious or immoral must be allowed. If our Brahmoism is to grow at all, a demand for suitable forms and rites of marriage for such international marriages, as each new type of cases arises (granting, of course, that the stronger of the two parties is not determined to swallow the weaker)—is bound to be felt, till the golden mean, between the customs and rites of the different nationalities concerned, have been found. Are we to tolerate superstitions in effecting this mingling of rites and customs? Certainly if they are irreligious, immoral or injurious, a Brahmo cannot tolerate them But all superstitions are not evil; many are indifferent. some are even spiritually ennobling, for example, our old Hindu superstition that all the gods are present in the guest (*sarvadevomayatithih*)

The Cooch Behar Marriage as a Model

Superstition is indeed double-faced. One may be guilty of being superstitious in trying to avoid superstition, just as one may be idolatrous in trying to avoid idolatry. All nations have their superstitions, for example to cross knives at the table, or to help one to the salt by placing some of it on his plate at the table, are English superstitions ominous of evil It is to be deplored that the England-returned Protest leader Mr A M Bose (and Pundit Shastri following suit), who could tolerate these and similar other superstitions in England, took fire when they noticed that at the Cooch Behar Marriage though "idolatrous *mantras* were omitted and the presence of an idol was dispensed with (Shastri quoting from official records),[1] a Hindu thread-bearing Brahmin officiated as the priest on the part of the Maharajah who belonged to a Hindu family,[2]—the legal minimum which the Government of Bengal "considered essential to the validity of the marriage," after the manner of the marriage rites of the Adi Somaj Rev G. G Roy, in consultation with the Pundit deputed from Cooch Behar, settled the forms and rites, "modifying and correcting the Hindu form, and removing from it the names of the gods and goddesses, and all allusion to the *puja* and *Homa*, and substituting in the place of the name of those gods and goddesses. the name of one non-dual God" At the celebration of the marriage on behalf of of the bride's party, Rev G G Roy took his seat in the *mandap* as the presiding priest (*acharya*), Keshub Chunder taking his seat at his side The priest on the bridegroom's side, under the direction of and as requested by Rev Mr Roy, dictated the *mantras* When this part of the work was over, the bride's party *with the bride* left the place. Then the priests lighted the

[1] Pt Shastri's H B S , Vol I, p 285
[2] G. G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol V, p 934

fire, and poured *ghee* (clarified butter) the Raja merely sitting there."[1] Says Rev Mr Roy, "That by expunging the idolatrous portions from the Hindu marriage rites, the complete overthrow of Hinduism was accomplished none can deny"[2]

> "The Raja of Cooch Behar as a non-Aryan has no part in the *Homa* There is no *Homa* at the marriage of the Sudra Unless the girl (at a Hindu marriage) performs the *Homa*, wifehood is not established Fried grain (*khai*) must be offered to the fire, for without it wifehood is not established at a Hindu marriage.... The Brahmins gave up the Vedic gods who preside over Hindu marriage rites, and honouring the monotheistic principles they agreed to celebrate the marriage, they placed themselves under the control of the non-Brahmin priest of the bride's side, and uttered such *mantras* as that non-Brahmin approved, allowing the Brahmin to be absent from the ceremony of making the fire the witness to the marriage, they violated the Hindu Shastra . Thus did Brahmoism, herself unharmed, lay the axe at the very root of idolatry."[3]

Indeed so complete was the overthrow of Hinduism effected by the Cooch Behar Marriage that the Ranees of Cooch Behar complained to the Resident Commissioner, saying —"None of our life-long relations and caste people, such as the Raja of Bijni, and the Zemindars of Pawat, Jowar, Luckipur, and Gouripore came to the marriage"[4]

Remembering our ideal of Universal Brotherhood and remembering also that if it is not to remain a dead letter, a mere pious dream, there must be international marriages both in India and outside India, who can help admiring how, like a hero, Keshub set the noble

[1] G G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol V, p 921-22.
[2] G G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol V, p 954
[3] G G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol V, pp 856-960
[4] Miss Collet's Brahmo Year Book for 1878, p 34

example of leaving us a model, to follow, of an international marriage Indeed his faith may be said to have removed mountains of opposition, and he may be said to have planted the banner of Brahma—the One-without-a-second—in the very stronghold of polytheism and superstition, though while achieving the success he did, he may be said to have made a martyr of himself in the noble attempt Having done all, almost the impossible, in the matter what was after all his estimate of the work he had done? Say Protap Chunder and Gour Govinda —

> 'We can state with authority that it is not the intention of the Minister to support all that took place in connection with his daughter's marriage, or that he would even fully defend his own side There are certain incidents in connection with this marriage, which if they have grieved anybody else, they should be told that his own heart has been more aggrieved about them than anybody else The forms and ceremonies were not altogether as he would wish, and he never concealed his own dissatisfaction about them If any thing wrong has taken place,—as other people will, for conscience's sake protest against it, he too is prepared unreservedly to call it wrong"[1]

Such then was Keshub's own estimate of the great work he had done, though to any other man he would seem to have achieved the impossible, to have planted like a true martyr the banner of his Brahmoism in the stronghold of Hindu idolatry, at the cost of his life And yet does his critic accuse Keshub of "magnifying his performances."[2] Pt Shastri in his *History* after he and his party had vilified Keshub to their heart's content, as we have already shown, now makes a show of magnanimity, about 30 years after Keshub's ascension, by a paltry admission saying:—"Nobody believes that he was

[1] G G Roy's Acharya Keshub Chandra, *Madhya*, Vol V., p. 937.
[2] Pt Shastri's "N D & S B S," p. 88

impelled by any filthy motive."[1] The Hindu gods and goddesses were thrown away, the Hindu idols were discarded, the Hindu *mantras* were mercilessly placed under the shears of a semi-Mahomedan Brahmo, the Hindu *Homa* was nullified by the absence of the bride, the Hindu priest had to place himself under the control of a threadless non-Brahmin in regard to the utterance of Hindu *mantras*,—thus was Hinduism thrown down root and branch Yet had the Protest Secretary, Shiva Chandra, the effrontery to accuse Keshub *and not the Christian Government concerned*, of "having countenanced idolatry,"—though the idol was not worshipped and the usual *mantras* of idol-worship were rigorously excluded. Indeed the official records quoted by Mr. Shastri before, prove that "the idolatrous mantras were omitted, and the presence of an idol was dispensed with."[2] Even the legal minimum of the mere presence of a Brahmin with the obnoxious thread, to assist in the ceremony in a subordinate place, under the semi-Mahomedan Gour Govinda, is objected to "Did you not indirectly sanction caste-distinctions by allowing a Brahmin priest of orthodox Hindu conviction and faith to officiate at the marriage?"[3] That means asking why were you not, like that Brahmin at the sound of the Vedas from my lips, scared away from your post of duty, by the sight of a skein of thread? Indeed, standing as Keshub did at his post of duty, backed by a Trinitarian Christian Government, till he accomplished it, Keshub did the right thing in the right place

After the idols gone, the *mantras* gone, the Shastras and the Homa all gone, as if still a thousandth dilution of Hindu idolatry and caste hang on to those few pieces of thread called *Upavita*? Hindu caste, what is it? It is a superstition or prejudice of the Hindu mind, regarding

[1] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol 1, p 305
[2] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol 1, p 285
[3] Pt Shastri's H B S, Vol 1, Appendix, p LXVII.

the Brahmin's monopoly over Vedic *mantras* etc , and his general superiority as regards sanctity etc , over the non-Brahmin When the Vedic *mantras* are themselves mutilated and disgraced by revision under the hand of the semi-Mahomedan Gour Govinda, the entire question of the Brahmin's monopoly over Vedic *mantras* is gone Again when the Brahmin at a marriage ceremony is brought down to the same platform, or to the same level as the non-Brahmin, and worse still is placed in a subordinate position to the semi-Mahomedan as *Sadasya*, or presiding priest,—and is made to recite just such mutilated *mantras* as that non-Brahman approves or directs, the entire question of the Brahmin's superiority over the non-Brahmin as regards sanctity etc , is also gone. Where then is there any "caste distinction" left ? And who brings this accusation against Keshub ? Those who themselves not only appointed well-known *Kartabhajas* or man-worshippers as their ministers, but sometime after the Cooch Behar Marriage themselves offered the pulpit of the Sadharan Somaj to the Maharshi who invested his son with the thread, himself officiating as minister Let the reader judge if our Protest leaders were not themselves time-servers,—worse than superstitious Pre-eminent among them stands Pundit Shastri, the man who could not only join hands with a European *avatarvadini* (believer in Christ's Incarnation) for effecting the discomfiture of Keshub, without the least scruple, but was also the main instrument in offering the Maharshi the pulpit of the Sadharan Somaj, after he had invested his son with that 'obnoxious' thread or *Upavita*, himself officiating as minister This special consideration shown to the Maharshi,—had it any connection with the Maharshi's contribution of Rs. 7,000, towards the building fund of the Sadharan Somaj ? Money with not a few in this world "covereth a multitude of sins ! "

To revert to the consideration of the Cooch Behar

Marriage. It was an inter-racial marriage in which mutual conciliation is a thing to be desired. The axe had been laid at the very root of Hinduism; and only as a matter of conciliation to the bridegroom's Hindu side, was a priest allowed with his thread, to assist in the ceremony, by reciting such mutilated *mantras* as the non-Brahmin priest approved And this was a legal necessity, or as the Christian Government expressed it, "essential to the validity of the marriage." What could we—I mean the Protesters—mean by objecting to the legal minimum fixed by a Christian Government themselves? Did we mean that the boy and girl were not to marry the girl and the boy they were in love with? Or that they were to marry each other illegally? If our eyes had not been jaundiced by party spirit and jealousy, to see as yellow anything connected with Keshub, we should have hailed the Cooch Behar Marriage as providential, as an effort made by our great leader and Minister, who has been miscalled a mystic, but is rather the realist of realists, to leave behind him for ourselves and our posterity, an example —a practical example, a model of inter-racial marriage, however imperfect, of the intermingling and mutual adaptation of rites and customs of marriage, consistent with the purity of our Brahmo ideal, and suitable for the Brahmo Somaj, which he believed was to embrace men of all nationalities and all ranks. Keshub was not a dreamer, nor was his ideal of universal brotherhood a mere pious dream. "Do not identify yourselves with any small sect, but embrace all humanity" "Believe me," said he, "every inch of this man is real, tremendously real,"[1] and the Cooch Behar Marriage was a gigantic effort on his part to give objective reality to his subjective ideal of universal brotherhood.

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," pp. 300, 324-5

for you may say with great truth what Keshub said of Jesus. "The objective world he absorbed in his subjective consciousness." His faith indeed removed mountains of opposition, making possible in the Cooch Behar Marriage, what to any other Brahmo of those days, much less of our day, seemed impossible It is as puerile to charge Keshub with the offence of encouraging idolatry or caste, as it would be to charge a Mahomedan or a Christian, or to charge Mr Dalton, and the Christian Government he represented, with that offence Rather armed with faith by persistent effort he brought up the marriage rites as nearly as possible up to our Brahmo standard. Let us therefore be thankful to Keshub for the model of an Interracial Marriage that he left us, forgetting its imperfections, both because it was the first of its kind, and because the difficulties he had to face single-handed, were stupendous !

The Marriage Providential Its Fruits

"I accept no truth unless it be such as can be demonstrated Thus I am a positivist in spirit, though I am opposed to positivism," said Keshub "If I am Asiatic in devotion, I am a European in practical energy." "Believe me every inch of this man is real, tremendously real ' Such was the realism of Keshub Chunder Sen,—the prophet of the Brotherhood of Universal Humanity, of which he left one practical demonstration in the Cooch Behar Marriage. How different was Keshub from those temporizing diplomatists, who "need policies and stratagems, the shifts and the defences" that falsehood needs to grapple with truth, who to-day usurp his place in our Brahmo Somaj, —those men who like Mara tempting Buddha tempted Keshub in 1878 to "reject God and Providence, and listen to their dictates in preference to His inspiration,"

in regard to the marriage of his own daughter It is these men who to-day are not ashamed to commit an outrage upon the true Brahmo ideal of Universal Brotherhood, by settling their marriages each within his own caste. "Get thee behind me Satan," Keshub's reply to them was "Keshub Chunder Sen cannot do it, will not do it,"[1] which reminds one of the noble words of Mahomet, "If the sun stood on his right hand, and the moon on his left, ordering him to hold his peace, he could not obey," not in pride, for "they say, (he) burst into tears"

We have discussed the value of the Cooch Behar Marriage as the model of an Inter-racial marriage in India. In another sense also, and in an equally important sense, was not the marriage of 1878 providential for its good effects among the ruling Princes of India, and through them in the whole Indian nation? Has not the leaven of the Brahmo ideal,—that every man or woman should be the faithful husband or wife of one woman or man—already begun to leaven the family life of some of our ruling Princes *e.g*, Baroda and Mayurbhunj? In a matter so beset with difficulties of its own, as an inter-racial, or inter-caste marriage with a ruling Prince, and the difficulties magnified a thousandfold by the machinations of the intriguing *Chanakyas* of the Protest camp, shall we not extend our heart's sympathy, accord our heart's admiration and gratitude to the great master who, at the cost of his life, opened out this unexplored virgin soil? Shall we not rather hope and pray to God, that all our ruling Princes and Chiefs be imbued with the Brahmo ideal, and that through their living example, set before their peoples, the blot of polygamy be removed for ever from the fair name of our Motherland?

Again we ask—Was the Cooch Behar Marriage provi-

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Am I an Inspired Prophet?" p. 238

dential ? Let sceptics or the man of prudence with his "arithmetic of fools" say what he will. We repeat with all the emphasis we can command that it was *Providential*, and why ? Because it led the way to the greatest good not of the Brahmo Somaj alone, but of all India. That some of Keshub's immediate friends deserted him opened his eyes. And what did he do? *parangchikhani*—the senses always look outwards, said the rishi. But some there be who *atmnabakshat* go into their very self. Keshub Chunder Sen, too, entered the secret closet of his heart, and there dived deep into *yoga* or profound communion with God O, then, was revealed to him the great healing balm not of the Brahmo Somaj alone, but of all India, yea, of all the world—The New Dispensation ! Keshub has himself given a picture of what took place in him by his account of the "*Four Stages of the New Pilgrim's Progress*," [1] (*Tirthachatustaya*) from which we cull the following :—

> "The *first*—the shrine of *the Body* full of external activity, where the different sects of religion—Hindus. Mahomedans, Christians and Buddhists are markedly cut off from each other, each differing from the rest by their practices and customs.
>
> "The *second*—the shrine of *the Mind* where the bodily activities are less marked though the sectarian spirit is as strong as before, and the sects quarrel with each other about doctrines and scriptures Each denomination persecuting and trying to destroy the others as in the Body-stage.
>
> "The *third*—the shrine of the *Heart* where the pilgrim has the first foretaste of what is really good Unlike the two preceding there is no marked sectarian narrowness here. Love unconfined within sectarian limits rules here, and the pilgrim, almost but not fully, begins to rise above the distinctions of mine and thine,

[1] Keshub's Sevaker Nivedana, Part IV, p. 82.

and though sectarian quarrels and disputes arise a brotherly love is extended to all"

"The *fourth*—the shrine of the *Soul* where all distinctions of sect are abolished, Gauranga and Gautama, Kavir and Nanak become one, where Hindu and Moslem, the Shakta and the Vaishnava, the ascetic and the householder become one, where the pilgrim realises that Jesus is Moses and Moses Jesus The differences between Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, Buddhists *etc* ..which in the preceding stages seemed insurmountable now disappear It is all stilled, all one The Hindu is realised to be the same as the Christian, the religion of Krishna the same as that of Christ, Brahma is beheld in all quarters The risks for discord here disappear altogether, for all truth is one"

This then is the precious fruit of the Cooch Behar Marriage, for Keshub, for the Brahmo Somaj, for India and for the whole world Keshub himself fully realized it, and went into raptures of thankfulness when he spoke of his enemy-friends to whom he conveyed his heart-felt gratitude; for it was their persecution that drove him to seek shelter in the Fourth Shrine—the alone to the Alone He thus invites his enemies in these words, found in the Sermon on "*Unto Our Enemies*," in the preparatory sermons of the Maghotsav :—

"O my enemies, let us enter the Mother's house, Brother-band of enemies stand, let me bow to you all. All my enemy-friends, here or elsewhere, stand in a row I have bowed to my friends before, now let me bow to my enemies to-day; for in you reside the Lord of the Universe If you had not appeared the Navavidhan could not have been revealed The fight was going on when from on High the New Dispensation came with the Mother O, the inestimable good that enmity can do! Glory to the persecutions of enemies glory to filling up newspaper columns with abuses, for it was that which brought into the world the New Dispensation O Mother, grant that I may overcome anger and become

humble as a lamb, that I may do good to my enemies. Grant us this blessing."[1]

The Protestors Vilification of Keshub

The Protest leaders and pre-eminent among them Miss Collet did not stop merely with impugning Keshub's inspiration. They meant business, and had no time to be fastidious about the truth of what they said They, therefore, again and again, in season and out of season, in town after town in India, and in England (making every possible effort that a long purse combined with positions of influence in society, could make—even to the extent of sending out emissaries to go from house to house), proclaimed the sad fall[2] of Keshub who had made himself open to the charge of having countenanced idolatry, and of having indirectly sanctioned caste distinctions. With Miss Collet, Pt Shastri, untrue to his national and hereditary instinct, became angry[3] with Keshub for his doctrine of the Motherhood of God.[4] One act of ill feeling leads to another, and we find Miss Collet almost paraphrasing many other charges against Keshub brought by her Indian prompters 'elated with joy at the prospect of having a prince for his son-in-law, etc.,[5] by insinuating that Keshub was dazzled by the splendour of a Maharaja This evoked the following noble rebuff from Miss Cobbe —"To suppose that such a man as he (Keshub) could be touched by the motives of vulgur ambition is the very last idea I would entertain"[6] Here in Bengal, again, Mr. A. M. Bose,

1 Keshub's Maghotsava, "Unto Virodhees," pp 42-3

2 "Here is an instance of a sad fall—a fall in the case of one who least of all, should have been a violator of principles which are the outcome of years of struggle on the part of the Brahmo body in general" Brahmo Public Opinion, 21-3-78

3 Pt Shastri's N D & S.B S, p 43

4 Keshub N D, Vol I, p 4

5 Brahmo Public Opinion, 4-4-78

6 Brahmo Public Opinion, May 16, 1878

who was to Keshub almost as his own younger brother in his early days, seems to have thrown the first stone accusing Keshub of apostasy. He writes in this strain :— "You are departing from the lines laid down by yourself" . "You owe it no less to yourself than to the general Brahmo public, that you should fully and frankly explain your position and views with reference to this marriage"[1] Demanding an explanation from a father on the marriage of his daughter! Did they ever dream of approaching the Maharshi, whom they now look upon almost as their ally in the Protest Movement, with such a demand in 1872,[2] when he invested his two youngest sons *Rabi* and *Soma* with the sacred thread, which in those early days of the Brahmo Somaj was felt by every Brahmo as a bolt from the blue? Another letter equally impudent and uncalled-for, sermonized Keshub, with the imputation of the meanest motives to him—"This was the letter of protest signed by 23 (*anusthanic*) Brahmos,"—(made capital of by both Miss Collet and Pt Shastri,[3] as being all of them men who had *borne* and suffered much for the sake of Brahmoism) really more than half of whom will be found to be among "the anonymous beings of the Brahmo Somaj" —*many of them joining it from other than religious grounds*. The vilest imputations, direct and indirect, are thrown out in this letter, *e g* —

> "The influence of the bridegroom's position and wealth has been so great in your mind"—"a religious father should attach greater importance to the moral and religious interests of a daughter, than to considerations of wealth or rank"[4]

And going in the wake of our leader, Mr A M Bose,

[1] Pt Shastri's History of the Brahmo Somaj—Appendix p XXIII.
[2] Bijoy Krishna Goswami's pamphlet on Brahmo Dharma *O Navavrdhan* quoted in the *Dharmatattva*, Magh 16, 1794
[3] Pt Shastri's H.B S , Vol I, p 278
[4] Pt. Shastri's H B S , Appendix p. XXVIII.

we, the meaner fry too, soon followed suit in such acts of impudence

Meanwhile the *Brahmo Public Opinion*, in collusion with Miss Collet, was carrying on a crusade of vilification for consumption abroad among Mr Sen's friends and admirers in England, or outside Bengal circulating such base calumnies as would not find a market in Bengal where people knew Mr Sen too well to swallow such base lies We give below a sample of the stuff with which Mr Shastri's friend, the Editor of the *Brahmo Public Opinion* used to feed his newly-fledged flock —

(1) that Mr Sen was known to preach one thing and practise another, and thus endeavour to reconcile fact and fiction ,

(2) that Mr. Sen should have been dismissed ten years before, "it is our sincere conviction that the measures that are now being adopted for the deposition of the Minister, ought to have been taken ten years before, when the evil star of man-worship first appeared in the distant horizon (B P O 4-4-78) ;

(3) that Mr Sen upheld the Jesuitical doctrine that the end justified the means (B P.O 21-3-78) ,

(4) that he had some ulterior object, say they, in joining the Brahmo Somaj, which was to him but a vaulting board from which to take a leap into something else ,

(5) that the apparently godly man is many a time in reality but the incarnation of an infernal spirit ;

(6) that we could expose the obtuseness of his moral sense ;

(7) who elated with joy at the prospect of having a prince for his son-in-law not only belied his long-cherished convictions, but, as it

were, ignored his former self, and actually sanctioned, would our European readers believe it, the expiation (according to Hindu rites) of his daughter,

(8) that he concocts the doctrine of *Adesh* to get over the marriage difficulties.

Keshub Chunder is even accused of "ingratitude to the Brahmo body in general," as if the Brahmo Somaj were a Joint-stock Company (like the Bengal Banking Corporation of some of the Protest leaders of those days), or the Political Federation Hall concern of later days with which some of them have been connected), and that Mr. Sen was the paid secretary and salaried minister of such a Brahmo Somaj!

Notice the refrain—"*Would our European readers believe it?*" Evidently all the calumnies that the *Brahmo Public Opinion* was disseminating, were meant for consumption in Europe, and for undermining Keshub's reputation with those friends and admirers who knew him personally only for a short period of six months in 1870.

All this is in black and white, but these are only samples of our performances in the line of vilification, in those days. I remember a grey-haired patriarch of our Sadharan Somaj to whom I was personally much attached in those days, comparing Keshub to the *Brahmachari*, or religious student in the Bengali proverb, "who unobserved quietly pockets a purse of thirty guineas." The climax in the course of our vilification of Keshub, was however reached when one of us—Sj. Ananda Mitra—brought out a filthy drama vilifying Keshub and his family, and sent it to me anonymously for perusal. It was so filthy that my wife tore it to pieces, and threw it into the fire The booklet was printed and published in the Roy Press of Kedar Nath Roy, one of that band of Mr. Shastri's 23 Protestors. When Keshub's friends tried to pursuade him to take legal steps against the

libeller, he declined to do so, giving his reason that "the author was persecuting and insulting him *personally* Keshub himself in giving the reason in his article in the *Mirror* as to "Why the Minister is Unpopular ? " tells us —

> "Because he is so lenient, and soft tempered, and will neither govern, nor judge, nor punish He is taken advantage of by everybody; he may be abused, maligned, defiled and kicked by the lowest and the least, because he cannot brook any form of resentment or antagonism on personal grounds " [1]

Now let us turn to Pundit Shastri In vilifying Keshub [2] he goes to such absurd lengths that one cannot but ascribe it to a deep-seated cause within himself. His opinions and observations on Keshub differ in different periods of his career, differ in different places and under differing circumstances All through his later life one may easily find out, even from a casual survey of his writings from 1869 to 1912, that he is the persistent victim of fleeting emotions which make him self-contradictory and oftentimes ridiculously unfair

The following taken from Pundit Shastri's ' Personal Sketch of Mr Sen," [3] will bear out the truth of my statements —

S N S [4]	D D.[5]
"Throughout his career Mr. Sen has been distinguished for three things·—	Yet Pt Shastri gives him credit for his habitual equanimity·[6] Does Mr Shastri mean

[1] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol II, p 145.

[2] A very near relative and disciple of Pt Shastri heard him say before Mr A C Sen and Sj. Prokash Ch Roy, just before the publication of the H B S , that "When this book will be out you will find Keshub brought down to the dust under our feet " This happened while Mr Shastri was living at Puddopukur Road, Bhowanipur, near Mr A C Sen's place where Mr Roy was then staying as a guest

[3] Pt Shastri's "New Dispensation and the S.B Somaj," pp 85–88.

[4] S.N S stands for Shivanath Shastri.

[5] D.D for Dwijadas Datta, the author.

[6] Pt Shastri's H B S , Vol I, p 279.

S N S.

(1) a proud and indomitable spirit, (2) a fine and powerful intellect, and (3) a strong and vigorous will These three combined with a habit of entire self-reliance have raised him to the prominent position he now occupies" Like every other proud nature he is shy to strangers but full of pleasant humour to friends, mild and affable to inferiors, but haughty and untractable to the least show of superiority in others and specially under opposition, conceiving his plans in silence, and carrying them with but half-revealed purpose. He does not condescend to take into his confidence even his immediate associates about his plans, and has no *friend* properly so called

"He is not altogether above the art of over-reaching an enemy by clever shifts, or of trying to compromise him by unfair and ungenerous means.'

D.D

what Keshub himself admits about himself in his *Jeevan Veda*?—"I shall not be enchained by anybody's love. Even my greatest friend says that I do indeed love—but am not enchained." If that be so it is to his glory If Shastri means anything else, everybody knows it is not true Does not Mr Shastri himself admit it, when he says :—"I feel that my attacks are levelled against one to whom I was once fondly attached, and still am bound by ties of love and gratitude?"[1]

One really wonders whether Pt Shastri is not transferring to Keshub by a *mental* mirage, or what the Vedanta calls *adhysa*, what we ourselves did to Keshub in the name of protest, under the leadership of Mr. Shastri and his colleagues How can Mr Shastri, then, speak of Keshub thus? "Mr Sen's conception

[1] Pt. Shastri's "New Dispensation and Sadharan B.S.," p. 84.

S.N.S.

D.D.

of the great and glorious mission of the theism of the Somaj to unify conflicting sects and creeds, was certainly prophetic!"[1]

"At times he is carried away by his wounded pride to use harsh and abusive epithets against his opponents"

Like the hard sayings of Jesus the hard sayings of Keshub are significant[2]

"Mr Sen has allowed himself to be led astray by an unfortunate idea—the idea of his being a singularly inspired man As a consequence of this Mr Sen has given up all study He has cut off all the channels of communion with other contemporaneous minds In his lecture on 'Am I an Inspired Prophet?' he exultingly remarks. 'How can he (meaning Keshub) who scarcely reads two books in 365 days be reckoned a wise or a learned man?' without knowing perhaps

Whatever the case may be for the book-worm who shines with borrowed light, and whose performances "smack of the lamp," it is quite different for those who draw wisdom with every breath from the fountain of all truth, whom our sages declare *nirgrantha*—above booklore. Did not the wisest of men say "much reading is a weariness of the flesh?"[3]

Keshub who in his lectures on "The Apostles of the New Dispensation" says—"Our selfishness keeps us in chains

1 Pt Shastri's H B S., Vol I, p 300

2 "To his adversaries in the Brahmo Somaj, by far the most embittered of any he had to deal with, his attitude was very different He was personally acquainted with each one of them, and brought his fierce knowledge of human nature to bear upon their motives and conduct .. Some of the language he had used against the leading members of the Sadharan Somaj stuck in their throats like fish-bones" *Vide* Mozoomdar's Life and Teachings of Keshub, pp. 246–251, written in 1885

3 *Vide* Emerson—"They know not what to do as they read". Books are for the scholar's idle times, when he can read God directly the hour is too precious to be wasted on other men's transcript of their readings

S N.S

that this cessation of communion with other minds is the cause of his later aberrations, as it was also in the case of Auguste Comte, the founder of the Positivist School of Philosophy It is a moral rule fit to be written in gold that whoever wilfully cuts himself off from the thought of mankind, him God dooms to darkness and confusion "

For want of the check provided by a constitutional form of Government he has practically developed a form of Popery in his Church, and for a similar want of the regulating balance of communion with contemporaneous minds, he has developed an amount of self-sufficiency which is almost appalling It seems his own self is the little world where he mostly lives and moves, as will be manifest from three facts — (1) He magnifies the most common and ordinary incidents of his life into extraordinary marks of singularity and greatness As a proof of this, mark the following declaration in his above mentioned lecture,—" My singularity began when I was fourteen years of age I

D D

within ourselves Sympathy breaks these iron chains, and drops us into the bosom of the sorrowing brother, so as to make us feel as he feels " Or, again, Keshub who in his lecture on Am I an Inspired Prophet ?" says—' I know not *my* Where is *my*, where is this self it does not exist," —he is represented by Pt. Shastri to have " cut himself off from the thought of mankind ! "

No charge could be more baseless than this against Keshub of Popery The man who did not know how to command his own servant, who would not decide anything in his Sri Durbar by his casting vote, the man who says in his *Jeevan Veda* .—" I cannot bear to see even the least of us in subjection to another If any one offers to place himself under my control, that also I can never bear "—that man is accused by a minister of a Brahmo Somaj, as encouraging a form of Popery !

S N S.

then abstained from animal food".. Is this after all such a singular affair as should lead Mr Sen to cry within himself—' What a wonderful thing I am!" (2) The second fact is Mr Sen cannot dismiss any commendatory remarks from his mind As he lives and moves within his own self, these remarks come again and again to him, till he finds in them some traces of his greatness and singularity As a proof of this read the following which I extract from his lecture on ' We Apostles of the New Dispensation" — "Sometime ago I remember I was conversing with one of the most pious Christian officials in India, now an Ex-Lieutenant Governor In the course of the conversation he looked at me seriously and calmly, for some moments, and said—' What is it that makes you so healthy and cheerful? Is it because you have a contented soul....I have since thought of the incident and the question has recurred to me again and again There is evidently something in me which suggests this question, and I thank God for it." Had Mr Sen's mind been habituated

D.D.

I ask the reader to say whether all this is not spite. If Pt. Shastri's eyes had not been jaundiced by jealousy, he would have seen that even this little personal compliment to him Keshub concludes with "I thank God for it,"—as was his rule, to magnify the Lord in all things

S N S.

to look around and look abroad, this simple remark, dropped at a casual conversation, would not certainly have lingered so long in his mind

The third proof of Mr Sen's making his own self his little world is to be found in the fact that he not only magnifies his performances, he also magnifies his sufferings. Listen to what he says about these sufferings — 'My infatuated critics and cruel persecutors will still perhaps go on and would not stop Already they have broken my bones and caused my heart to bleed....For nearly a quarter of a century have I suffered persecution and calumny, and who can deny the shades in the picture of my life are awfully dark and very dismal ?"—"From We Apostles of the New Dispensation."

D.D.

The man of whom the *Statesman* of those days said, —' When Keshub speaks the world listens ! " is said to ' make his own self his little world ! " Was Pt Shastri speaking of the man in the moon, or of the man whom all the world knows held before us, in word and deed, what even Mr Shastri in his lucid intervals though rare, seems sometimes to admit,—the highest perfection of altruism, saying of himself with truth —" Long since has this little bird 'I' soared away from this sanctuary, I know not where, never to return again My self has long since been annihilated by God " (Inspired Prophet)—Again:— " I believe that my life is identified with my mission, and that remonstrances and protests cannot make me swerve from it ". . ." For me that individual self-consciousness of self has long ago been melted away "

Here is a picture painted by the Pundit of one who seems nothing short of a snob and a villain,—one who

has been invariably regarded as God's chosen apostle by such persons as Maharshi Devendra Nath and Paramhamsa Ram Krishna, Prof Max Muller and Dr. Martineau, Rev. Kali Charan Bannerji and Mr Bankim Ch. Chatterji. What a revelation of the Pundit's mentality! Have we not a right to ask, if the admirers of Mr Sen in the Sadharan Somaj, mean merely to look on, while the true evangelist of the Brahmo Somaj is vilified with impunity by one who still poses as their minister, or will they, like true men and faithful friends, compel him to withdraw these false charges?

Sequel

Forty years after that great event shall our Brahmo world, Sadharan and Navavidhan, still remain divided and allow the evil counsel of jealous deserters to prevail by bearing false witness against India's greatest prophet and patriot? And who is this chief accuser and vilifier who says "Mr Sen magnified his sufferings?" How often have we been bored by the accounts, in season and out of season, given by Pt Shastri of his own sufferings from the *lathials* (ruffians) engaged by his father, who however never really touched one hair of his head, because of his joining the Brahmo Somaj. Scores of other Brahmos of those days if they were as garrulous, and as much disposed to make a display of themselves as Pt Shastri, could possibly have given accounts of greater suffering because of espousing the Brahmo faith Is not he the man who is always so inebriated with the self-consciousness of his own supreme merit that many a time the audience feels shocked by his self-display? Who has not heard him deplore the want of a suitable successor to his *gadi*? "Even tram conductors are prepared by training I am much troubled to think that I have not trained any one who can fill my place in the Sadharan Somaj when I am

gone." Take another instance, how he speaks, Pope-like, threatening with excommunication the New Dispensation Brahmos, who still count among themselves most of those patriarchs, who are his seniors in the Church, and who faithfully stood by the side of Keshub Chunder to the last.—

> "The future historian of the Brahmo Somaj," says Pt. Shastri, "may have an occasion for treating the New Dispensation as a distinct sect, outside the limits of the Brahmo Somaj creed-bound and man-bound like Mahometanism, and also may be led to exclude the New Dispensation from Brahmo history"[1]

The New Dispensation Church with its ideal of "the harmony of all scriptures and all saints," of "the Church of Universal Brotherhood which tolerates not the least sectarianism," "the religionof universal inspiration,"—with its ideal of the immediate intercommunion of divinity and humanity without mediators," and of "the mystic dance of all saints and prophets in the heart"[2]—this ideal of Keshub, free as the air and limitless as the sky above, is misrepresented and criticised as "creed-bound and man-bound" by Pt Shastri in what he calls "The History of the Brahmo Somaj," but what is really a record of his own feats in the manufacture and manipulation of facts so as to "magnify his own performances" Of course the vilification of Keshub and his band is his sole object,—the vituperative epithets 'creed-bound and man-bound' may be mere sound and fury,' meaning nothing. What can the expression mean? It is hoped that he does not expect the New Dispensation Church to be bound by no creed whatever,—not even our creed of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, that they are to be absolutely like the weathercocks at the mercy of

[1] Pt Shastri's H B.S., Vol. II, p 107
[2] Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol I, p 300.

'the changeful many' for that is really the creed of the 'majority' It is also hoped that he does not expect the New Dispensation Church to be bound to no man by ties of love or gratitude, and to cherish no feeling of admiration or reverence towards any man—*nil admirari*—with a vengeance It is hoped that he does not expect them to be absolutely colourless, so as to devote their heart, soul and mind to the worship of 'the mob' If indeed Pt Shastri does not expect the Brahmo Somaj to be a *hortus siccus* of this type I appeal to the reader to peruse Keshub's—"What is the New Dispensation?" and judge if there can be anything under the sun more liberal, more broad than that ideal of universal harmony he preached, which is now the creed of the New Dispensation Church, however much Pt Shastri may misrepresent that Church to secure a handle for his vilification It is owing to such mischievous slanders and misrepresentations as these representing Keshub's *Navasamhita* as the *Al Quoran* freely circulated in this country and abroad by Pt Shastri and his satellites, that there is a popular error against the New Dispensation Church, and I myself laboured under such an erroneous conception until lately when upon a more intimate acquaintance with the writings of Keshub and his apostles the erroneous impression has been cleared up Pt Shastri is a poet, truth and history are not likely to be in his line,—in them he may not feel in his own element. Would that he went back to poetry abandoning 'history' altogether? Might not one exclaim with surprise like Pt. Shastri himself —"Does the Pope of Rome say anything more than this?"[1]

Such then is the man who accuses Keshub of "introducing a system of Popery" in the Brahmo Somaj The unbiased reader will estimate such an accusation at its true worth The tricks that were resorted to by

[1] Pt. Shastri's N D and S B S, p 81.

Keshub's opponents—once his followers—in collusion with the men in power in Cooch Behar to rob Keshub of his good name, are too mean for description, and they so preyed[1] upon his generous soul—for he was a man after all, that they seriously aggravated the fell disease that had attacked him, on account of his overwork in the cause of humanity, and hastened his departure at the early age of forty-six One would think that Pt Shastri's campaign of vilification of his *guru* would cease after Keshub's ascension, but no, he is carrying it on with renewed vigour, if possible, after the ascension of Keshub and Protap, in his "*History of the Brahmo Somaj*," knowing that there was none in the field, who could contest his false allegations, when even Bhai Gour Govinda stood just on the threshold of the other world—for he passed away on March 1, 1912, Shastri's "History of the Brahmo Somaj" appearing in March, 1911. Mr. A M. Bose's friend of his school-boy days—the Rev. Bhai Banga Chandra Roy—tells me that Mr Bose, a year or two before his departure, in a familiar conversation complained that the juniors of the day did not respect their seniors, as they did before He had good reason to complain after the City College affair But I ask myself, have we, seniors, deserved the respect of our juniors? After we have set up the cult of teacher-killing I would not blame our juniors, if they horse-whipped us A friend tells me—one who is also a friend of Dr P. K. Roy—who was once a most enthusiastic Protest leader, that Dr. Roy, after his zeal in that ignoble cause had abated, told him:—"What is born of a mutiny, what can we expect from it but mutiny."

To-day, when Keshub Chunder is gone to his rest in the bosom of his Divine Mother, it breaks one's heart

[1] "Already they have broken my bones, and caused my heart to bleed, and often and often at their hands have I suffered deep and unutterable agony"

to think that we should have allowed ourselves to be so far misguided by our evil genius as to have literally killed and stoned our prophet. It seems to-day as if from the regions of glory, Keshub is whispering to our ungrateful ears :— "Brahmo Somaj, Brahmo Somaj, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chicken under her wings, and ye would not!"

CHAPTER IV

THE SCHISM AND MISS COLLET'S OPPORTUNITY

Miss Collet's View of Our Brahmoism

To form a correct estimate of Miss Collet's position in relation to the Brahmo Somaj, the reader has to remember firstly, that she was an orthodox Trinitarian Christian of the English Church, and not an Unitarian or a Theist, as many in the Brahmo Somaj, specially in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, seem to fancy. I had a faint idea that she was not a Theist, even before I saw her. But I found out from what I saw of her, and from what her niece, who had charge of her, told me herself in 1888,—for Miss Collet was a cripple and an invalid,—that Miss Collet was a Christian of the Anglican Church.[1] I do not know what some of our brethren of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj mean by minimising this great fact about her faith and denomination, merely saying that "she approached, if not actually joined the Church of England,"[2] or by saying, "Though not in complete agreement with the Brahmo Somaj in theology, she had completely identified herself in interest with it. The Brahmo Somaj was uppermost in her heart and mind.

[1] "I am a Trinitarian Christian and not a member of the Brahmo Somaj,"—Vide Miss Collet's "An Historical Sketch of the Brahmo Somaj," p IV

[2] Mr Sarkar's edition of Miss Collet's Life and Letters of Rammohun Roy, p XXXI

The Brahmos felt her to be one of themselves "[1] Is it a great compliment to her to allow herself to be mistaken by us for what she was not,—to be one of those who "*anyatha santamatma namanyatha pratipadyate*"—make themselves known to be what they are not? Or is it either a compliment to our own understanding to mistake her so persistently for what she was not? Or was it not rather a diplomatic move on the part of one or other, or both the parties? As a matter of fact however, in her "Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy," Miss Collet did not take any care to conceal her contempt for Unitarianism, either Hindu (which means of course the Brahmoism of the Raja or ourselves) or Christian! She says in her "Rammohun Roy" "He (Rammohun) would extract the rational elements out of Hinduism, and appropriate the ethical contents of Christianity,[2] at the same time casting ridicule on the eclecticism of people who would make such an attempt,—that is, of the Brahmo in our sense, by calling him "a spiritual Eurasian."[3] Miss Collet goes on with her caricature of Rammohun's Brahmoism, saying: "He tried to find a common denominator for Hindu and Christian Unitarianism" Then she has a fling at our Unitarian brethren of England and America whom we look upon as the Brahmos of Europe and America: "The device might please his intellect, but European Unitarianism left little room for the development of this warm-blooded oriental passion for religion" She even seems to ascribe a sinister motive to them. "We cannot wonder at Unitarian Christians regarding him as an illustrious champion of their views."[4] How very uncharitable of her to hint that

[1] Mr Sarkar's edition of Miss Collet's Life and Letters of Rammohun Roy, p XXXII.
[2] Sarkar's edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. 236.
[3] " " " " p. 239.
[4] " " " " p 232

they did so, not because it was true, but because it was their interest to do so!

Then she goes on to speak patronisingly, though with a suppressed contempt, of Rammohun's attempt to lay the foundation of the Brahmo Somaj, which he thinks was the result of the "large ambitions" of Rammohun's "devout and comprehensive intellect," and not the result of a Special Dispensation of Providence. "The foundation of the Brahmo Somaj showed an effort, not merely to satisfy the large ambitions of a devout and comprehensive intellect, but to meet the more specifically religious needs of a genuine fellowship, and of a 'social morality touched with emotion.'"[1] Miss Collet no doubt states the truth when she lays down the standard for a true religion, saying: "Religion kindled imagination, roused passion, set the conscience in motion, as well as appeased the reason." As judged "by these standards," says Miss Collet, "Unitarian Christianity with which he (Rammohun) once hoped to effect much, (which thus evidently also includes our Brahmoism) was seriously lacking. It was too exclusively intellectual" Having condemned Unitarianism, whether Christian or Hindu, or Christian and Hindu mixed, which is Brahmoism, without giving her reasons, she proceeds to extol by contrast the other Christian sects like her own saying, "In the other Christian sects, there might be less of reason and reasoning but there was manifestly more of religion,"[2]—as if there was a war interminable between reason and religion inherent in our human nature, as if the harmony of reason and religion, which is the ideal of Brahmoism, is impossible of realisation! Will not the philosophers of our Somaj come forward with a refutation of her position? Perhaps not, because of

[1] Sarkar's edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 236
[2] " " " " p. 237.

"their gratitude to her for her self-imposed, disinterested labours, in compiling the Brahmo Year Book."[1] Miss Collet proceeds to accuse the founder of the Brahmo Somaj of Deism. "It will not do to dub Rammohun Roy 'Universal Theist'.. At the outset his Theism was intellectually not far from the Deism of the last century," patronizingly adding however that in the end, "it was religiously not far from the spirit of Christianity"[2]—meaning of course the orthodox Trinitarian Christianity of her own denomination Indeed Miss Collet has also an open fling at the Anglicism of manners affected by some of the Brahmo leaders, along with a fling, like the Rev. Lal Behari De's, at the eclecticism of the Brahmo Somaj. "The Rajah was no merely occidentalized oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian."[3] One would like to ask whether in Miss Collet's opinion Christ was a European, that she should call us, Brahmos, Eurasians because we, along with Raja Rammohun, accepted the "Precepts of Jesus as a Guide to Peace and Happiness" Such then really was Miss Collet, though as Mr Sarkar says, "The Brahmos felt her to be one of themselves."

Continuing her attack on the principles of the Brahmo Somaj which Rammohun founded, Miss Collet says: "In the earlier stages of his emancipation, his (Rammohun's) faith seemed to differ little from the 'fictitious natural religion' of the eighteenth century philosophers, save for a strong infusion of oriental passion" In truth, however, Rammohun's faith, at least when he founded the Brahmo Somaj, of which we get an unmistakable glimpse in the hymns of his own composition, and the 'fictitious natural religion,' and

1 Sarkar's edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. XXVI–XXIX
2 " " " " p. 237.
3 " " " " p. 239.

'deism of the last century' which Miss Collet calls "too exclusively intellectual," are opposed as the antipodes to each other,—for Rammohun, when he founded the Brahmo Somaj, did not rely at all upon mere philosophy which, he says, rather "blinds the eyes for God-vision" (*darshanete adarshan*) by making people too sceptical by habit and causing their enthusiasm to dry up How futile he found the attempts of the philosophers in the search after God, Rammohun thus pointedly shows in one of his own Bengali hymns:—"The *Nyaya* (which corresponds in its theology to what Miss Collet calls 'Natural Religion' or Deism and with which she identifies Rammohun's religion), the *Sankhya*, the *Patanjala*, after much cogitation find no resting ground, the Vedanta though styled infallible, knows no end in Him, the *Mimansa*, entertaining doubts, makes the most elaborate study He, the Cause of all, transcends mind and speech"

On the contrary, Rammohun relied on direct God-vision "This moment shall you be happy, beholding the (Supreme) Self in the (finite) self." Or again: "O mind, He who is your constant companion, where do you search for Him! Not beholding Him in your heart, why do you wander away? Behold the Omnipresent Lord who guides the senses in their action by purifying the mirror of the mind" This hymn[1] is also quoted by Rammohun's biographer (in Bengali), Nagendra Nath Chatterji, as one of Rammohun's own composition, and may be said to be another version of the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

It may be said that our leaders of the type of Pundit Shastri, had misled Miss Collet, so that she identified Brahmoism with 'Deism' and 'natural religion'—for

[1] Nagendra N Chatterji's Bengali Life of Rammohan, 4th ed, p. 286.

Pundit Shastri, I am sure, somewhat carelessly, speaks of "the Mission of Brahmoism" to be "to build faith and spiritual life on," what he calls, "the pure basis of naturalism and independence,"[1] and what Miss Collet would call the "fictitious" basis Again, in his "History of the Brahmo Somaj," Pundit Shastri repeats, equally carelessly, the same error in stating, what he calls the "practical aim" of the Brahmo Somaj · "It is a Church with a definite practical aim, namely, to establish *natural religion* as an effective mode of spiritual culture."[2] Pundit Shastri, identifying our Brahmoism with "natural religion," provided a justification for the slur Miss Collet cast on Rammohun Roy's "Theism"? Was not that like cutting our own nose to spite Keshub? "Charity covereth, indeed, a multitude of sins,"—and Miss Collet's partiality for the Sadharan Somaj leaders was so great that neither Pundit Shastri nor any of his supporters dared do anything to disillusion her mind in this respect by contradicting her Though I hold no brief for Pundit Shastri, yet as a Brahmo, I must say that if Pundit Shastri meant by "naturalism," and "natural religion" no more than Miss Collet's "Deism" and "natural religion," he did a great injustice to the Brahmo Somaj of all the sections I am rather inclined to believe that Pundit Shastri did not mean it, and in his lucid intervals, at least, could not mean it,—for "Deism" or "natural religion," in Miss Collet's sense, is but a diseased overgrowth of the intellect, as she herself points out, at the expense of the heart and the conscience, very different from the "harmonious development of the whole man" which has always been the aim of the Brahmo Somaj.

I have reason to think from what I have known

[1] Pt Shastri's "N D and S B S.", p 38
[2] Pt Shastri's "History of the Brahmo Somaj," Vol II, p 267

of Pundit Shastri, that when he speaks of the Brahmo Somaj as "aiming to establish" "naturalism" and "*natural religion*," he means by the term "nature," exactly what his *guru*-opponent, Keshub, meant by *Prakriti* as opposed to *Vikriti*, or being (out of tune with nature), in his prayer of 4th June, 1880 :—

> "O God of mercy, make me a follower of nature (Prakriti) Thy nature is love, Nature is not discord The name for Nature is harmony,—not opposition. Thou reconcilest things apparently opposed O Supreme Spirit, Thou alone canst make the tiger and the lamb drink at the same bathing place If we settled our own worldly affairs or trained our own minds probably we should make it a perfect muddle Perhaps it will be all intellection, or perhaps all emotion Perhaps, it will be all hot, or else it will be all cold. When I am Thine, there can be no enemy to me in Thy nature O Father, I would not have liberal thinking alone, I would have liberalism in life and character O when will such happy times come, when we shall combine all the notes of the gamut into one tune, all the religions into one religion The world goes to ruin, because of sectarianism O Master, reduce all into harmony Bring the whole world into the chamber of my heart"[1]

Again, says Keshub in his "We Apostles of the New Dispensation" :—

> 'God is the grandest and sublimest synthesis, the harmony of all truth, and unity of all goodness.... Monotheism represents the science of religion, the philosophy of God-consciousness, the logic of synthesis. Polytheism is anarchy and chaos in religion, it is the death of science, of logic, and philosophy. Surely multiplicity is death, but unity is life In the sea of

[1] Keshub's *Dainik Prarthana*, "*Prakritir Nam Samanjashya*," p. 187, New Ed. Pt. 1 Who does not read in this the Hegelian method of dialectics, of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, fully assimilated and carried to a greater perfection than even Hegel himself dreamed of? Yet there are pedants in the Brahmo Somaj who would say, Keshub had no philosophy.

> analysis you are lost amidst divisions, quarrels, perplexity, and confusion. You find peace as soon as you enter the tranquil haven of synthesis Come then to the synthetic unity of the New Dispensation "[1]

What a transcendental flight of the highest philosophy! Might not a Kant, with his "antinomies of cosmology," or a Hegel with his "dialectic method," sit at the feet of this prophet of the New Dispensation, to take lessons in that highest philosophy? Yet, do we, in the pedantic blindness of self-sufficiency, accuse Keshub's "synthetic unity of the New Dispensation," as without a philosophy at its back! With this let the reader also compare the concluding words of Rammohun in his First Appeal to the Christian Public in defence of "The Precepts of Jesus,"—published in 1820—"May God render religion destructive of differences and dislike between man and man, and conducive to the peace and union of mankind." Who can help realising in this that Keshub's New Dispensation of the Harmony of Religions is the unfolding of the seed first sown in the heart of Rammohun, the true grandfather of the Brahmo Somaj as Keshub called him

I have also great pleasure in bringing to the notice of our readers what Pundit Shastri himself said in his *History*, in a moment of great lucidity, although about 1878, in the blindness of a party conflict, he called Keshub's doctrine of inspiration as "obnoxious" It will help the reader to realise, that even Pundit Shastri, far from meaning by 'natural religion' the Deism and the fictitious "natural religion" with which Miss Collet would identify our Brahmoism, means just that religion of universal harmony, the New Dispensation of his *Guru* of 1869 When speaking

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," p 305

of Keshub's "sense of the universality of Theism," Pundit Shastri says in his *History* :—

> "He (Keshub) found all of them (the great religious teachers of humanity) knit together by a common bond Beneath the local and national differences of various creeds...., he found a universal element in which all of them agreed This conviction became further modified in later times, into an ideal harmony of all religions, which led him into the rather novel doctrine that all religions were true Many of us will certainly deny that position, but Mr Sen's conception of the great and glorious mission of the theism of the Somaj to unify conflicting sects and creeds was certainly prophetic" [1]

The pity of it is that even in his most lucid moments, Pundit Shastri is unable to rise above the bias of his party Or is it merely a sop to the Cerberus of party-spirit, when Shastri says: "Many of us certainly deny that position" (that all religions were true)? He, of all men, should remember that in 1866, three years before his own initiation, Keshub had said: "With what is purely personal, local and contingent in them (those whom Pundit Shastri calls 'the great religious teachers of humanity,' or whom Keshub calls 'Great Men'), we have certainly nothing to do." It is evident, therefore, that if Keshub had said "that all religions were true," he could mean only "what is divine and universal in them," which Keshub said "deeply concerns us all, for it is God's gift to us" [2] Pundit Shastri says "Mr. Sen's conception of the great and glorious mission of the theism of the Somaj to unify conflicting sects and creeds, was certainly prophetic!" Shall we still persist in saying—"Evil be Thou my good" [2]

One thing is clear, that from the days of Rammohun

[1] Pt Shastri's "History of the Brahmo Somaj," Vol, 1, p. 300.
[2] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Great Men," p. 39.

in 1820, we have clear proof that the spirit of the New Dispensation or the harmony of religions, has been at work in the Brahmo Somaj, like a buried seed sprouting and developing itself, with time, and that it is absolutely false to call our Brahmoism either "Deism" or "the fictitious natural religion of the eighteenth century philosophers" It should now be clear to us, Brahmos, that Miss Collet in spite of her professions and even deeds of friendship, for the Brahmo Somaj and the Brahmos,—specially for the Sadharan Somaj and its leaders—, was really inimical to the theology of the Brahmo Somaj May we ask, what Mr. Sarkar then means, when he says in his "Autobiographical Sketch" that "she had completely identified herself with it (the Brahmo Somaj) in interest"? Did Miss Collet identify herself "with the Brahmo Somaj in theology" only the more easily to effect a total wreck of the Somaj and of its Brahmoism on the ostensible plea of helping it, so that the Brahmo Somaj might pass away "yielding place to the popular Christianity of her type,"—so that her dream of "India English-speaking, India Christian, India socially Anglicised"[1] might be easily realised? "Faithful are the wounds of a friend but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful!"

The Cooch Behar Marriage and Her "Favourite Hero"

The next fact that the reader should bear in mind in order to be able to realise more fully the position of Miss Collet in the Brahmo Somaj, is that, after Keshub Chunder had delivered his famous lecture of the 5th of May, 1866, (three years before Pundit Shastri's initiation into the Brahmo Somaj) on "Jesus Christ Europe and Asia," Miss S. D. Collet, along with many

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. 210.

others of her fellow Christians of the orthodox Trinitarian Church in England, thought that Keshub was a "*Christian at heart*" "Miss Collet," says Mr. Sarkar, in his 'Biographical Sketch' 'nursed at this period, a faint hope that Keshub might yet accept Christianity!"[1] As Miss Collet's interest in Keshub Chunder even in those early days—from 1866 to 1877—admittedly arose from her "faint hope that Keshub might yet accept Christianity," it stands to reason that her interest in the creation of a rival Somaj against that of Keshub under the name of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj was also due to a similar hope. Her hope that the new Somaj, for which she devoted all her energies, would help materially towards the "Christianization" of India and the Indians,—or, as she calls it the realisation of a "Christian India" in her sense,—was however baseless. The creation of the new Somaj was *really* due to her proselytizing zeal and not, *as pretended*, to her alleged charge of Keshub's securing the "validity of the Cooch Behar marriage by idolatrous rites."[2] Be that as it may, so great was Miss Collet's admiration for Keshub in those early years, that she literally idolized him in the early seventies, saying "How much of the marvellous unsealing of religious life then manifested was owing to the unique personality of Keshub Chunder Sen, it is not necessary to determine; but he was certainly felt (and doubtless truly so) to be the chief leader and sustainer of that movement"[3] She may have seen "Raja Rammohun Roy in South Place Chapel, London," more than thirty years before, *i e.*, about 1832 "Though then only a girl of tender age," says Mr. Sarkar, "she must have been greatly impressed, for throughout her life, she retained a warm attachment

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, XIII.
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," Preface to 1878, p 5.
[3] Miss Collet's "An Historical Sketch of the Brahmo Somaj" (1873), p 19.

for the Raja."[1] That might have been quite true but the fact remains that before the Cooch Behar Marriage of 1878 Miss Collet gave us no proof whatever of any "warm attachment for the Raja" on her part During those days her "attachment" was all for "Mr. Sen, whom she called her friend"[2] Indeed it was only a little before her death, that Miss Collet began to write her "Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy," which she left unfinished, when she died in 1894. "I am dying," said she, "I cannot finish my life of Rammohun Roy."[3]

The fact that Miss Collet began her "Life of Rammohun Roy" so late in life, that she could not finish it, leads us to presume, that the "warm attachment for the Raja," of which Mr. Sarkar speaks, was *an afterthought which took hold of her mind*, when, from 1878, she had to abandon the hope, that Keshub Chunder would ever accept the Christianity of her Anglican Church Miss Collet really made no secret of her motive in supporting Brahmoism, whether that of Keshub, or that of Rammohun, though our leaders, ostrich-like shut their eyes to it In her article in the "Contemporary Review" of February 1870, called "Indian Theism and its Relation to Christianity," Miss Collet said —

> "It should also be remembered, that in 'God's education of the world,' every lesson has to be mastered separately It took the Hebrews some centuries to learn their pure Theism, and only when that was forever rooted in the heart of the race, was the Eternal Son revealed It is possible that same process may be in store for India, where the Gospel has hitherto taken so little hold of native minds, as to suggest the idea that

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. XI.
[2] " " " " " p XII
[3] " " " " " p. XXX.

some hidden link needs to be supplied between it and them "[1]

Thus Brahmoism was to Miss Collet *that missing, "hidden link,"*—the ladder wherewith we Hindus are to mount up to "the Gospel," and to the "Eternal Son!" So long as our Brahmoism was only in the germ which merely "pleased the intellect," and barely met the needs of a "social morality touched with emotion,"—such as she considered Rammohun's Brahmoism "in the early stages of his emancipation," to have been, not far from "Deism," or the "fictitious natural religion" of the eighteenth century philosophers; so long as it was not as fully explicit as "the development of the whole man" as Keshub declared its object to be, she could "nurse" a hope, that by "a process" of evolution, Brahmoism would lead India, some day, to the "Gospel" and the "Eternal Son." She grew quite desperate, however, when she noticed in about 1878, that Keshub preached "the reconciliation of reason and faith," "the religion of (direct) universal inspiration,"[2] and "the immediate inter-communion of divinity and humanity, without meditators,"[3] the harmony of the national and the universal (which Miss Collet, in her disappointment, called "tampering with idolatry"), the harmony of "*Jnana-bhakti-karma*" or the intellect, the affections, and the will, or the whole human nature Miss Collet could not but fear then that Brahmoism was also becoming perhaps more than the Christianity of her type, a religion that "kindled imagination, roused passion, set the conscience in motion as well as appeased the reason," and thus a dangerous rival of Christianity, with all the additional advantages of "the national tendencies,

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p XIV.
[2] Keshub's "New Dispensation," Vol. 1, p 300.
[3] Keshub's "New Dispensation," Vol. 1, p. 301.

sympathies and precedents."[1] She at once made up her mind and determined to take advantage of the Cooch Behar Marriage in raising a conflagration in the Brahmo Somaj, far out of proportion to her fear of any possible "idolatrous rites" in the marriage, determined to effect the ruin of that living and life-giving Brahmoism by creating a schism with her policy of *Divide et impera*, saying "Could there be any common ground left between the self-satisfied theocracy and the general body of the Brahmo Somaj", determined to see Keshub's leadership repudiated by "the general body of the Brahmo Somaj"[2], determined to proclaim to the world by means of questionable tactics that Keshub "has not only quite ceased to represent the Brahmo Somaj, but has gradually come to hold a position entirely different and virtually opposed to it"[3] What truth there is in these calumnious insinuations, and what value to attach to these charges brought against Keshub, by one whose creed of Divine Incarnation, in Rammohun's opinion was as idolatrous as "a Hindu's belief in his *Thakur*,"[4] I leave the reader to judge for himself. To effect the complete overthrow of Mr Sen more easily, Miss Collet, like a true kingmaker, spread out her octopus-like feelers to India and with the aid of her henchmen among our intellectuals in the Brahmo Somaj, wished to see Rammohun set up as the representative man of a Brahmoism which, in her opinion, was more or less akin to "Deism" or "natural religion," and publicly declared as the "uncrowned king" of the Bramho Somaj. She moved heaven and earth, England and India, for the realisation of her aim.

How greatly did Miss Collet idolize Keshub Chunder

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p. 142
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p 70
[3] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1880, p 36
[4] Rammohun's English Works, p. 891. (Panini Office Edition)

in the early seventies, deserves to be considered! We have said that when Keshub delivered his lecture on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia," in 1866, Miss Collet hoped that he would accept the popular Christianity of her denomination. In 1876, only two years before she rebelled against her 'hero,'[1] "in," what Mr Sarkar calls, "the interesting confessions of Miss Collet, kindly supplied by one of her nieces as having been written by Miss Collet, when it was the fashion to get one's friends to write their confessions in one's album," Miss Collet named as one of her "favourite heroes in real life,"[2] *Keshub Ch. Sen*, next after *Gladstone*, and as the only one outside Christendom. Though she had seen Rammohun about 1832, and was probably "greatly impressed" by him, she never thought of mentioning his name as her hero, even two years before the "schism of 1878," the year after which we "began to celebrate Rammohun Roy's memory,"[3] *probably at her suggestion.* Miss Collet, however, nowhere made mention of the Raja as one of her heroes. It was also only years after the schism, and as I have said, as an after-thought, in the interest of that schism, she began to write her life of Rammohun, which she could not finish before her death in 1894, *i.e.*, even ten years after the ascension of Keshub Chunder. Thus it is clear that Miss Collet's interest in Rammohun Roy was *an after-thought* rendered necessary by the exigencies of the schism of 1878. Miss Collet said in the Preface of her Year-Book for 1876: "The Brahmo Somaj or Theistic Church of India is an experiment hitherto unique in religious history." Only a few months ago Pundit Shastri also told me that the Brahmo Somaj was an "experiment"—a "difficult and novel experiment," as he said, "to establish a

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. XXXI.
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. XXXI.
[3] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p. 51.

Church on the votes of the majority." The coincidence in their views seems singular. An "experiment" indeed! And she cherished the hope that the experiment would be found to be unsatisfactory, and the leader Keshub Chunder would sooner or later "accept Christianity"—popular Evangelical Christianity! But Keshub instead of giving signs that he was advancing towards the realisation of her hope, "set up the 'plea of *Adesh* (divine command) in *defence of the marriage of his daughter*" [1]

We have seen that in the eye of Raja Rammohun Roy, with her doctrines of Divine Incarnation and Immaculate birth, Miss Collet was herself as much,[2] or even more,[3] an idolator than the Hindu, and yet like one who sees the mote in her brother's eye, but not the beam in her own eye, Miss Collet felt "much surprised and alarmed," because "the validity of the Marriage could only be secured by idolatrous rites" [4] Those who would not impute idolatry to the Trinitarian Christians' "adoration of Jesus Christ as the very God," "must not" in the opinion of Rammohun, "any longer impute idolatry to any religious sect." [5] Miss Collet then has surely no *locus standi* to talk of "idolatrous rites in the Brahmo Somaj of Rammohun Roy." "On March 2, I received," says Miss Collet, "a long letter from Mr. Mozoomdar, announcing that the wedding was fixed The news now became public, to the grief and astonishment of nearly all of Mr. Sen's friends." Keshub's enemies in Calcutta were but too ready to take advantage of this feeling of alarm and astonishment, and says Miss Collet, "Within a fortnight of Mr. Mozoomdar's letter, came letters and papers from

1 Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878, p. 6.
2 Rammohun's English Works, p 908
3 Rammohun's English Works, p. 147
4 Miss Collet's Brahmo Year Book, 1878, Preface, p. 5.
5 Rammohun's English Works, p. 173.

our well-known and long-esteemed friends, Mr. A. M. Bose of *Calcutta*, and Dr. P. K. Roy of *Dacca* informing us of the excitement which the event had aroused in the Brahmo Somaj." His Calcutta enemies without letting the grass grow under their feet, started what they called "the Brahmo Somaj Campaign," and spread their octopus feelers from India to England, even as Miss Collet did from England to India, and entered into a conspiracy with her so as to "filch" Keshub's good name both in India and in England. What after all was the matter? Keshub Chunder, a Minister of a church, would give his daughter in marriage. Some members of his congregation feared that certain ceremonies inconsistent with our Brahmic principles would take place. All that they had got to do was to depose him, with the aid of the law, if necessary Why should Mr. Bose and Dr. P. K Roy rush to Miss Collet, (Miss Collet herself being an idolator in Rammohun's opinion, as I have shown), and that even before anything had actually happened, sending her "letters and papers?" Let the reader say or let Dr. P K. Roy himself say, whether their procedure could be looked upon as *bonâ fide!*

Again, a direct Divine command, according to Miss Collet's type of Christianity was the special privilege of the prophets and apostles of Christianity, as for example, Moses or St. Paul. She therefore lost all patience with her 'hero' of 1876, the moment she learnt that the "wedding day" of the "Cooch Behar Marriage" of 1878 "was fixed," both because the validity of "the marriage could only be secured by idolatrous rites," as she imagined, and because of "the plea of *Adesh* or divine command set up in its defence."[1] In the "statement for the information of the Brahmo public" published in the *Indian Mirror* of March 17,

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878, p. 6.

which she quotes in full, it is said that the Deputy Commissioner of Cooch Behar pointed out to Keshub Chunder, "that the proposed marriage was calculated to do a great deal of good to the country," and that Keshub Chunder, before expressing his opinion, laid down the following conditions (1) The Raja must declare that "he is a Brahmo or Theist, (2) the ritual must be that of the Brahmo Somaj, or Hindu rites divested of idolatry; (3) if the marriage could not be deferred till the parties "attain their full majority," there was to be "a formal betrothal only", and (4) all the theistic conditions as to marriage rites must be strictly observed The Deputy Commissioner gave Keshub distinctly to understand that the marriage, to be celebrated on the 6th March, "was to be a betrothal only,"[1] and the "Government undertook to guarantee that this was to be strictly maintained"[2] The statement of Messrs P C. Mozoomdar and G. G Roy concluded with the words "According to the will and commandment of his God, he has indeed given his daughter in marriage to a royal house" The orthodoxy of Miss Collet could not brook the idea that direct Divine Inspiration or Divine Command, which is the exclusive privilege of the apostles of Christianity, should

[1] Autobiography of an Indian Princess, p 51

[2] Miss Collet in the Brahmo Year Book, 1881, p 76, says that Mr Sen "on the 20th Oct, 1880, performed a re-marriage ceremony for his eldest daughter, the Maharani of Cooch Behar, and her husband who had shortly attained his majority, and was thus free to go through a non-Hindu ritual, before taking his wife from her father's home That the actual commencement of their married life should be thus marked by a simple Theistic ceremony was creditable to all concerned" It is creditable to Miss Collet too, that she should give this credit to Mr Sen; but her henchmen in India, who even danced when she piped, for boycotting *Harinam* from our pulpits, took no notice whatever when she gave Keshub credit for this "re-marriage", for it was not to their purpose, to give Keshub credit for anything he did, and they would never do it It cut away the main ground from under their feet, rendering that schism, on which they had set their hearts, altogether untenable

be spoken of as ordinary "human nature's daily food,"—as cheap as our plain *dal-bhat*, or *dal-roti* (bread). She considered it blasphemy, and flew into a rage, saying: "It may seem incredible that any *sane* persons should believe in the reality of such a commandment, for such an act as the Cooch Behar Marriage, but this has actually been the case in a small circle of Mr. Sen's disciples".[1]

In other words, in her fit of impatience she considered Keshub and his faithful band *insane*! Why? Because they "believed in the reality of such a commandment"! Saul of Tarsus, seeking the Will of God, asked—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And the Lord answered unto him "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." The Lord said unto Ananias "Arise and go into the street and enquire for one called Saul of Tarsus" (Act IX-6, 11). Were either Saul or Ananias or their followers 'sane persons,' we ask, when *they* "believed in the reality" of the "commandments" *they* received? Were these commandments "a deification of blind impulses"? Does God, too, syllogise, when He commands, like our Protest leaders? A Christian Government "undertook to guarantee that the marriage would be viewed by all parties as a betrothal only,"—that "all the Theistic conditions as to marriage rites must be strictly observed,"—yet would she call Keshub and his band insane! And she would at the same time deny them the privilege of the loss of their sanity! For she quotes with approval what a protest leader had said in the "Brahmo Public Opinion" of the 6th June, 1878, that "Babu K. C. Sen was at the moment either deluded or deceitful" Keshub "deceitful"! Yet Pundit Shastri testifies. "The protesters never questioned the sincerity of Mr. Sen's declaration that he acted from what he

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878, p. 76

considered to be a Divine Command."[1] And we declare from our pulpit "*satyameva jayate*"—"Truth alone conquers"! Miss Collet quotes what she calls a "thorough reply" to Mr Sen: "God could never have issued such a command to him, because the fulfilment of it involved idolatry, which is absolutely forbidden to every Brahmo."

I need barely allude here to the merciless criticism to which Rammohun subjected the popular Christian doctrines of the Immaculate birth, the Trinity, and the Atonement, for which Miss Collet, as a Trinitarian Christian, stood as the champion. Yet by some irony of fate, it was Miss Collet who, under the ægis of Rammohun himself, aspired to set up herself as umpire on a question of idolatry in the Brahmo Somaj. She makes up for her incompetency to sit in judgment on what is Brahmic or un-Brahmic in our rituals, by her sledge-hammer logic of doubting the sanity of those who would believe in either the wisdom or the sincerity of those who had the moral courage to support her discarded hero of 1876, now her opponent,[2] against the dogmatism of herself and her Indian henchmen She was, no doubt, deluded by our attaching to her verdicts, on questions altogether beyond her grasp, a great deal more value than they deserved.

Her Policy of *Divide et Impera*

We have discussed Miss Collet's objection to what she calls "the plea of *Adesh* or Divine command." One word here about what she says regarding belief in Divine 'inspiration' among the Protest leaders. Miss Collet says: "Mr. Sen has persistently endeavoured to

[1] Pt. Shastri's H. B. S Vol. 1, p 289.
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878–79.

fasten upon the seceders the obloquy of denying the belief in Divine inspiration, but it is a perfectly baseless charge."[1] Was the charge really baseless? We have referred to Pundit Shastri's "obnoxious" doctrines—that of 'Divine inspiration' being one of the three. They were mentioned in the *Brahmo Public Opinion* of 1878. I also noticed that the Protest leaders shifted their ground as regards inspiration possibly in consideration of the feelings of their Evangelical ally, or of their patron, the Maharshi. "What they have really denied," says Miss Collet, "is the infallibility of Mr Sen, who certainly lays claim to it, under the name of an unerring Divine *Adesh*."[2] Pundit Shastri, however, said in 1881: "If after the preaching and experience of about fifty years, we now begin to show a tendency towards inspired and infallible authority, is it not virtually giving up our old ground?"[3] Let the reader then say if Miss Collet is not speaking for her clients, without a brief, when she says that the 'seceders' merely denied "the infallibility of Mr. Sen"? They rather deny the possibility of any "inspired and infallible authority" at all; including even the Apostles of her own church, which in her blindness she does not see They rather wish to reduce Brahmoism to a mere "conjugation of the verb to think in all its moods and tenses", as represented by Rev. Lal Bihari De, the Christian missionary. They would even repudiate the authority of her Rammohun Roy in the Brahmo Somaj as regards Divine inspiration, for commenting on the name 'Christian' Rammohun said: "Some require from him who claims the title of Christian, only an adherence to the doctrines of Christ, as taught by himself without insisting on implicit confidence in those of the Apostles, as being

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p 69
[2] " " " " " p. 69.
[3] Pt Shastri's "N. D. and S. B. S.," p. 39.

except when speaking from inspiration, like other men, liable to mistake and error." [1]

"Liable to mistake and error except when speaking from inspiration" proves conclusively that "infallible Divine Inspiration" has been an accepted doctrine of the Brahmo Somaj, from its very inception, that Pundit Shastri betrays the grossest ignorance of the accepted doctrines of the Brahmo Somaj, when he repudiates the belief in "inspired and infallible authority" on behalf of the Brahmo Somaj But whose is the infallibility in the inspiration? Not man's, but God's. It is absolutely untrue when Miss Collet says that "Mr. Sen laid claim to infallibility" A fallible inspiration in Rammohun's opinion, we see, is not an inspiration at all, for, speaking of the Apostles, he says, they are "liable to mistake and error, '*except when speaking from inspiration.*'" An infallible inspiration like that of the Apostles, or an infallible Divine command, Keshub claimed for every man, by his doctrine of "universal inspiration," for he says 'Daily does God speak to each one of us, not to saints and prophets only, but to the least among us" [2] Speaking of "Deism—half-brother of Atheism," Keshub says.—

> "It glories in the assumption that no truth is positive, no doctrine of religion is absolutely correct It holds that no moral rule or injunction is divine, and no creed is supported by God's authority, but that on the contrary religion is a human thing, whose source and authority are altogether human, and there is consequently no certitude whatever in religion or morality? This is the dangerous position of Deism Deny authority and you deny God" [3]

This borrowed light, this infallibility derived from Divine authority, Keshub maintains, is open to every

1 Rammohun's English Works, p 483–484
2 Keshub's "New Dispensation," Vol. 1, p. 103.
3 " " " Vol. 1, p. 286.

true Theist, no less than to the Apostles of Christ. Without this derived infallibility, we firmly believe, Messrs Bose and Shastri, and their faithful comrades of 1869, could not have endured those fiery trials they had to endure, when they were called to the Brahmo Somaj. Especially does the man who could speak of Keshub's ideal of the New Dispensation as "certainly prophetic," give proof unmistakable of an undercurrent of sub-conscious faith in infallible Divine Inspiration in his heart of hearts, though he should openly deny it. I cannot forget with what enthusiasm we sang in those days in chorus, at our public *sankīrtans*,— in the early seventies,—"The Infallible Word of God can never err." (*Abhranta Ishwarbani kabhu mithya naya re*)

For whom did Keshub claim infallibility? He said: "I have a higher self and a lower self, and I see clearly the line of demarcation between the two."[1] Does this look like claiming infallibility for himself? He does indeed claim infallibility for God when he says "My mission none can resist for that is of God" "Would you have me reject God and Providence, and listen to your dictates in preference to His inspiration? Keshub Chunder Sen cannot do it, will not do it."[2] It is equally untrue to allege as Pundit Shastri does that Keshub ever contended that any one should "accept his preaching as revelations of infallible truth, thus binding down the thoughts and consciences of men to the utterances of one man"[3] In answer to this charge brought by Pundit Shastri, I would refer the reader to go over Keshub's sermon on *Swadhinata* ("Independence") in the *Jeevan Veda*, where he says —

> "I cannot bear to see even the commonest man in our body subject to another. I cannot bear to see any one

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Am I an Inspired Prophet?", p. 237.
[2] Keshub's Lectures in India, "Am I an Inspired Prophet?" p. 238.
[3] Pt. Shastri's "N D. and S B S", p. 33.

> subject to another If any one places himself in subjection to me that, too, is most intolerable to me ? Hell itself will swallow me with its jaws wide open ".. 'Am I to thrust my opinions upon another's shoulder ? Shall I lord it over another by forcing upon him my discipline ? When I am not a slave myself to another, never shall I make another a slave to me ? "....

Again in addressing the Apostles in 1881, Keshub said · "Whatever I say whether it be true or not, ascertain it by appealing to the Spirit of God."[1] "God is to you all in all....Proceed in whatever direction He leads "[2] These give the lie direct to the charge brought against Keshub Chunder of attempting to "bind down the thoughts and consciences of men to the utterances of one man ?"

Another reason why Miss Collet had to discard her hero, was Keshub's outspokenness In 1879. the year after the Cooch Behar Marriage, in his Town Hall Lecture, "India asks Who is Christ ?" Keshub who, she hoped, "might yet accept Christianity," publicly said: Christ "will come to you as self-surrender, as asceticism, as yoga, as the life of God in man, as obedient and humble sonship. For Christ is nothing else "[3] Again, in his lecture on "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," Keshub called on all men to become Christs, great or small, saying .—

> "Let us all be so many Christs, each a small Christ in his own humble way. We shall have no outward Christ, however pure. For what is Christ ? Not a doctrine, but the eternal and universal spirit of sonship "
>
> "If you are Christians you will quarrel and fight, but if you are so many little Christs, the harmony of heaven

[1] P. C. Mozoomdar's "Life and Teachings of Keshub Ch Sen," p. 242

[2] G G Roy's "Acharya Keshub Chandra," *Aniya II*, p. 264.

[3] Keshub's Lectures in India, "India asks Who is Christ ?" p. 261.

will reign among you, and there shall be no sectarian divisions" [1]

He placed Chaitanya and the Hindu Rishi by the side of Christ, saying "The Lord Jesus is my will, Socrates my head, Chaitanya my heart, the Hindu Rishi my soul, and the philanthrophic Howard my right hand." [2] Was not all this sufficient to have dashed all her hopes of the eventual "Christianization" of the Brahmo Somaj, in the popular sense, to the ground? Poor lady! Her mind rebelled against her hero, and she joined in a conspiracy with our protest leaders, for the overthrow and vilification of her former hero She cried with impatience "The sceptre has departed from the Brahmo Somaj of India, the leadership of Keshub Chunder Sen has ceased to exist" [3] It would have driven her to despair to find that, to-day, in the very heart of her Sadharan Somaj, Keshub Chunder is spoken of as "the representative man of the Brahmo Somaj." Even her beloved Pundit Shastri speaks of Keshub's ideal of the "harmony of all religions," which she ridiculed as mere "experiments in the process of fusing various religions into a new chemical compound" [4] as "certainly prophetic"!

When Keshub said. "Our God is both Father and Mother" adding "what is it but a prejudice to object to the application of the term 'Mother' to God"; and again, when that highly poetical call of India's Mother to her "loyal soldiers and devoted children" in India, to fight for their "national redemption," somewhat in the spirit and style of the appeals of the Salvation Army, was published as the "Proclamation" of India's

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," pp. 325-326
[2] *Ibid*
[3] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878, p. 80.
[4] " " " " " 1881, p. 49.

"Mother," Miss Collet spoke of all this as an "undisguised piece of blasphemy" "fatally significant of his recent course."[1] Was it blasphemy, because it could not be reconciled with the doctrine of "Immaculate birth"? When Keshub frankly said in "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," "Honour Christ, but never be Christian," Miss Collet calls it a "heartless fiasco"[2] She says "Christianity he flatters only to repudiate", "Brahmoism he ignores"; "Mr. Sen's teaching has ceased to be Brahmic!"[3] In loving the Brahmo Somaj does not she seem to love the child more than its mother? The Apostles of the New Dispensation take the vow of poverty, and Miss Collet with the familiar English prejudice that "Poverty is a crime,' brands it as "the virtual initiation of a mendicant policy"[4] An idolator herself, being "on a par with a Hindu's belief in his *Thakur*" in the eye of Rammohun she arrogates to herself the position of a judge of idolatry, complains of the symbolic character of the ceremonies, such as the flag-ceremony, the Homa, and the Baptism, etc, of the use of the name of *Hari* in hymn-singing, and asks with the blindness of an intolerable bigot: "Can any sane observer call this Brahmic teaching"?[5] Keshub says that these ceremonies were introduced to "explain the spirituality of certain existing ceremonies" in a "most impressive way" "Who were they that performed the rites? All? No. "Only a few," says Keshub "How often were they performed? Only upon one occasion," says Keshub Miss Collet, however, with her characteristic bigotry, deprecates their "totally un-Brahmic character"! To her Keshub's appeal to his congregation "You cannot better serve your countrymen than by singing the name

1 Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1880, p 32
2 " " " " " 1881, p 48.
3 " " " " " 1881, p 133
4 " " " " " 1881, p. 56
5 " " " " " 1881, p. 130

of *Hari* in the streets,"[1] was something painful. She ridicules what she calls the "mixture of the 'Great Varuna,' and John the Baptist, and its childish pretence that the immersion in Mr Sen's garden pond was 'not in ordinary water,' but in the sacred Jordan,— (by the Vedantic *Adhyasa* altogether beyond her comprehension) exactly where Jesus Christ was baptised eighteen centuries ago," which in her opinion seemed "too absurd to need criticism or comment"[2] She cannot tolerate the use of any impressive symbols for illustrating deep spiritual truths, or what we elsewhere called, "religious algebra." She even protests against "singing the name of Hari in the streets," because "Hari is one of the names of the God Vishnu"[3] Little learning is dangerous The pity of it is that our leaders danced as she piped, when they objected to the use of the name 'Hari,' from the pulpit, taking the cue from her and withdrawing the objection, when she apologised for raising it, saying, "No doubt, I was mistaken" "I now apologize"[4] Again, in discussing "the philosophy of idol-worship" Keshub had said· "Hindu idolatry is not to be altogether overlooked or rejected," and recommended the worship of God in "all His manifestations," saying that we should contemplate Him with His numerous attributes, as Saraswati, Lakshmi, etc. "This Hinduizing tendency has now gone very much farther," says she, than "as synonymous with the one only God"[5] Referring to Mr Sen's cultivating other traditions besides those of Hinduism, she says .—

> "Mr Sen aims, however, at cultivating other traditions besides those of Hinduism, and has made a sort of hierachy of the founders of great religions" With

1 Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p 58.
2 " " " " " 1881, p 66
3 " 1880, p 33 and 1881, p 129.
1881, p 130
1880, pp. 33 and 34.

this hierachy he assumes to place his own followers in spiritual communion, by means of (so called) pilgrimages ..On August 8 there was "a pilgrimage to Jesus," and on September 19, "the Brahmo devotees were introduced by the Lord to Arabia's benefactor and prophet" Miss Collet feels so shocked at "this painful picture," as she calls it, that she exclaims with disgust: "How far is the Brahmo Somaj implicated by all this erratic teaching?" [1]

But we ask what was Jesus to Keshub? The spirit of "self-surrender," "asceticism," "yoga," "the life of God in man," "obedient and humble sonship" "Christ," said Keshub, "is nothing else" What was "Arabia's benefactor and prophet" to him? "The deeper faith and wisdom of Islam" "What was Keshub's pilgrimage to the saints" then? A mere allegory for the realisation through prayer, of the spirit of the saints, or as he himself expresses it "beholding prophets and saints through the Lord as their Mediator" What is it but a highly poetical and impressive presentation in real life, of *a new 'Pilgrim's Progress'*? It is truly Brahmic inasmuch as it excludes all Mediators, but God Himself! Keshub longs to "soar on the pinions of oriental transcendentalism into the purer atmosphere of yoga" Miss Collet, and other meddlers like herself may say from a distance: "We shall scarcely be able to resist the conclusion that he (Keshub) has not only quite ceased to represent the Brahmo Somaj, but has gradually come to hold a position entirely different, and virtually opposed to it." [2] To those, who like Miss Collet, insist on seeing God through mediators all this may seem absurd and erratic To such Keshub would say. 'When I say 'I sat with

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1880, pp 34 and 35
[2] " " " " " 1880, pp. 36

Moses and Jesus,' you would misconstrue a plain piece of poetry and then ridicule it as a fact of life"[1]

Divide et impera! That was Miss Collet's policy To foment the spirit of schism in the Brahmo Somaj and thereby to effect its ruin, like that of a house divided against itself so as to clear the ground for its eventual Christianization In the guise of a *faithful* friend, she exclaims "Could there be any common ground left between this self-satisfied theocracy (of Keshub), and the general body of the Brahmo Somaj"?[2] Did she hope that the general body of the Somaj separated from Keshub would, like a headless trunk, fall down dead? Mr. Mozoomdar picturing the danger of "death by isolation," looming before the Brahmo Somaj, "if we dare to violate the national tendencies sympathies, and precedents of our great country," said in his Lectures "Will the Brahmo Somaj Last?" "The sympathies of large communities of men are eminently conservative. Contemplate the history of Buddhism Behold again the fate of the Albigenses Let me warn you gentlemen, their fate (of the Buddhists, etc.) shall be the fate of the Brahmo Somaj"[3] On this Miss Collet, as if throwing off her mask of friendship, for the Brahmo Somaj, says: "Better, far better, that every Brahmo should share the fate of the Albigenses at once, (i.e., be exterminated like them) than that the Theistic Church of India should stoop to save its life by a discreet conformity to the national tendencies, sympathies, and precedents of the country"[4] Ay, quite so! Cut off from the moorings in the ancient theism of our nation, and beheaded by separation from her God-appointed leader, the Somaj would fall like a headless trunk And that would bring

[1] Keshub's Lectures in India, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation," p. 300.
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book." 1881, p. 70
[3] " " " " " " p 141.
[4] " " " " " " p. 142.

us near to what Miss Collet longed to see: "India Christianised, Anglicised, and English-speaking."[1] But let no Brahmo forget that the grandfather of the Brahmo Somaj told us to look upon friends of her type as "on a par with" other idolators.

Divide et impera again! Or rather the Hindu policy of "Peace, bribery, division, force" (*Sama-dana-bheda-dandah*) all at once. Miss Collet next shamefacedly seeks to draw away Mr Mozoomdar, the man whom in 1878 she had publicly accused as guilty of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, from Keshub's band of the faithful She extolled him to the skies, for "the lofty idealism which is natural to himself," (Mozoomdar), but which, she pathetically said Mr Mozoomdar attempted 'to reconcile with the grotesque caprices which he tries to admire in Mr Sen"[2] With what importunity does she plead her case before him saying. "Is it too late to entreat him to drop this thankless task, reconsider the whole situation, and resolve to face the facts boldly." She thus continues her pathetic appeal "I cannot but indulge the hope that Mr Mozoomdar may yet find a career which shall give full scope to all his highest impulses untrammelled by the supposed necessities of party-compromise, and free from the irritations of party conflict" With what art does she conclude her appeal, saying. "To no friend of the Brahmo Somaj would such a result (i.e., Mr Mozoomdar's secession) give greater pleasure than to "the unwilling antagonist who now closes this controversy."[3] Indeed it was reported in those days that one of the Protest leaders openly said that if they could succeed in making Mr. Mozoomdar of Calcutta and Bhai Banga Chandra of Dacca to secede from Mr. Sen, they would have made the dove to feed on the very floor of Ke-

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. 210
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p. 142.
[3] " " " " " " p. 143.

shub's houses (i e , completely ruined him). She had first tried *sama-dana*,—or making common cause with and give help to the Protest leaders and thereby creating a schism in the Brahmo Somaj. She thought she had ruined Keshub by isolation But lo! she now realised that it was hopeless to vanquish Mr. Sen merely with the aid of her henchmen in India, for like the Phœnix Keshub seemed to rise from his ashes, triumphantly saying. "That winnowing fan, the Cooch Behar Marriage, has done, and is doing, immense good to the Brahmo Somaj by removing the chaff from its membership.....A new fountain of fresh truth seems to have been discovered since "[1] This fountain of truth is that harmony of all religions which even Pundit Shastri spoke of as "certainly prophetic," of course after Miss Collet was gone to her rest The unconquerable Keshub would even say "I believe when the Brahmo Somaj reached its perfection there will perhaps be but two or three men in it "[2]

Adopts Rammohun as "The prophetic type" of the "Christianization of India"

Having cast off the hero, in whom she rested her hope for the eventual Christianization of India, Miss Collet looked out for another "Nature," it is said, "abhors vacuum" Though that may not be true, there is no doubt that Miss Collet's nature abhorred the vacuum that was created in her mind by the casting away of her hero. Looking round, her eyes fell upon Rammohun Roy, who being long dead, would, she thought, be much safer than any living man,—for the mind of a living man may change or have "grotesque

[1] "Indian Mirror," Sept 19, 1880 also quoted in Miss Collet's Brahmo Year Book, 1880, p. 35

[2] "Indian Mirror," Feb. 15, 1880, also quoted in Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1880, p 36.

caprices," as she thought, Mr. Sen had his, but a man mute in death, you could represent as it suits your purpose, with impunity, and without any fear of contradiction Miss Collet, therefore, unearthed Rammohun's mummy, and with the help of Keshub's Indian enemies—the Protest leaders, who gave her in this undertaking, their whole-hearted support, for a purpose of their own, she set him up as the leader of the Brahmo Somaj, in place of her discarded hero,—their discarded leader Keshub Chunder Sen, for no other reason, so far as she was herself concerned, than that, as she said: "We have observed his (Rammohun's) remarkable anticipation that India would eventually become Christian"[1]—meaning, of course, Christian, after her own Trinitarian type.

Speaking of the formal installation of Raja Rammohun Roy, as the leader of the Brahmo Somaj, to replace her discarded hero, Miss Collet herself says: "It may perhaps be remembered that at the first anniversary after the schism of 1878, the Adi and the Sadharan Somajes combined to celebrate Rammohun Roy's memory, an invitation to all Brahmos having been sent out to meet for that purpose, at the house of the venerable Devendra Nath Tagore"[2] What was there in Rammohun Roy to attract Miss Collet to him? In his Brahminical Magazine (1821), Rammohun, under the pseudonym of Shivaprosad Sarma, had said that the doctrines of the Puranas and Tantras, "if unreasonable, are not more so than their Christian Faith" (*i e*, of Marshman and other Christian missionaries of Serampore), and asks, "If while a man declares that God is not man, he again professes to believe in a God-Man or Man-God, under whatever sophistry the idea may be sheltered,—can such a person have a just claim to

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 235
[2] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p 51

enjoy respect in the intellectual world ?"[1] Rammohun thinks that the Christian's "worship of Jesus Christ as God" is as much idolatry as the Hindu's worship of "Rama and other supposed incarnations,"[2] as the very God. Rammohun, however, has said a great deal to prove that the "belief in the Divinity of the *Holy Saviour* is on a par with a Hindu's belief in his Thakur,"[3] which we need not reproduce in this connection. While Keshub on the one hand, in his lecture "That Marvellous Mystery the Trinity"—explained that mystery, saying: "Divinity coming down to humanity is the Son; Divinity carrying up humanity to heaven, is the Holy Ghost," Rammohun, on the other hand, mercilessly assailed the doctrine of the Trinity of Miss Collet's Anglican Creed, calling it "polytheistical,"—even trying to hold it up to ridicule because of its apparent self-contradiction: "They say that God is one, and yet say that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God"[4] What was there, then, in Rammohun Roy, one cannot help asking, to attract the mind of a Trinitarian Christian lady to him? Was it merely because, Rammohun being dead, his ideas and ideals could be distorted to any extent, with impunity? We leave the reader to furnish the answer to this question.

About the year 1832, "the Select Committee of the House of Commons," says Miss Collet "was busily employed, in considering how the Government of the people of India might be advantageously remodelled," and that "Rammohun was naturally most concerned with what directly affected his own countrymen "We have" says she, "from his hand, under date, July 14th, 1832, a highly suggestive document which appeared in the General Appendix to the Report of this Select Committee, and was so submitted to Parliament. It

[1] Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, pp. 147 and 148
[2] *Ibid*, p 212 [3] *Ibid*, p 891 and pp. 905 8 [4] *Ibid*, p. 166

consists of *Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans.*"[1] In those 'remarks,' it appears that Rammohun Roy looked upon the "freedom for British capitalists to colonise amongst them (*i e*, Indians), which would thereby bring all Indian questions, and Indian expenditure directly under the control of the Parliament, as great "boons for his countrymen"[2] Rammohun's opinion as expressed in those remarks, was 'that the settlement in India by Europeans should at least be undertaken experimentally, so that its effects may be ascertained by actual observation on a moderate scale"[3] In making this recommendation to the Select Committee, Rammohun gave a forecast of both the possible advantages and the possible disadvantages, and in commenting upon the character of the "large body of respectable settlers," that would then eventually come to occupy India, Rammohun happens to make the casual observation that they would 'consist of Europeans and their descendants professing Christianity, and speaking the English language, *in common with the bulk of the people* as well as possessed of superior knowledge, scientific, mechanical, and political, who would bring the vast Empire (India) in the East to a level with other large Christian countries in Europe"[4] Notice the expression "in common with the bulk of the people" What could Rammohun mean when he said, "professing Christianity and speaking the English language in common with the bulk of the people?" Rammohun further remarked "If events should occur to effect a separation (between England and India) still a friendly and highly advantageous commercial intercourse may be kept up between two free and Christian countries,

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 205
[2] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy," (3rd Ed), p. 124
[3] Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works, pp 319-320.
[4] Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works, pp 316-317.

united as they will then be by resemblance of language, religion, and manners."[1]

What did Rammohun really mean? Evidently Rammohun was advocating his country's cause like an attorney, before the bar of English Public opinion, and naturally he would place before the British public such prospective advantages as would make the deepest impression on their minds. He was speaking of the mere possibilities and like an advocate, appealing to English prejudices and sentiments He was not certainly making a public declaration of the articles of his own creed before the British people It was not at all necessary for him to do so He need not, therefore, be supposed to have given an uncalled-for expression of his own innermost religious convictions That his English readers did not look upon his 'forecast' of the advantages, including this prospect of a Christianized India, as a genuine expression of his own personal convictions, is also apparent from Miss Collet's contemptuous notice of those who did not see eye to eye with her She said: "The cynic may be ready with the jibe that this part of the programme was strictly for British consumption"[2] Miss Collet, however, interpreting these casual remarks in the light of her own desire, thought that in them Rammohun had laid bare the very core of his heart and his creed, while he was thus pleading the cause of his country, which was really the duty he had then undertaken to do Though perhaps the remarks themselves did not warrant her interpretation, the wish in her mind became, as it too often is, the father to her thought Indeed Rammohun, as he says himself in concluding his 'Revenue System in India,' was "beseeching any and every authority to devise some mode of alleviating the present miseries of the agricul-

[1] Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, p. 319.
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 209.

tural peasantry of India[1] But Miss Collet mis-reading his real object went into raptures, taking them as a kind of confession of faith, on the part of Rammohun, and as giving expression to a genuine desire on the part of Rammohun, that the 'bulk' of his countrymen in India, should completely break away, when the time came, from their moorings in the religion, traditions, and even language of their own country and race, and come to profess popular Christianity, the Anglican Christianity of her type, and to come to speak the English language; and that in this way, in course of time, England and India would become united by a "resemblance of language, religion, and manners" It is quite possible that Rammohun was only pleading after the manner of the "learned counsel on the other side" as the advocate of a cause only, and perhaps never dreamed that any body could ever mistake it, or would in the future, distort it into a confession of his own faith

In her Article in the "Contemporary Review" in 1870, on "Indian Theism and Its Relation to Christianity," Miss Collet explained the secret cause of her sympathy and support for our Brahmoism,—which she looked upon as a "hidden link"[2] to connect "the native minds of India" with the 'Gospel' and 'the Eternal Son,'— as a "preparation, certainly beginning, however unconsciously, under the Brahmo Somaj,"— which God "will surely lead into all truth," in His own time and in His own way."[3] That was the real ground for her sympathy for us, Brahmos, and for our Brahmoism, which she hoped would, in time, die away, giving place to Trinitarian Christianity. "Let us not, then," she appeals to her fellow-believers, "refuse our Christi-

[1] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p 114
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. xiv.
[3] *Ibid*, p. xv.

an sympathies to these Hindu Unitarians." This really explains why she flew into raptures, when she came across these "Remarks" of Rammohun on "Settlement in India by Europeans" In her imagination, on that flimsy foundation, the poor lady built a castle in the air exultingly remarking: "He shows here with ample clearness the kind of India he desired, and to some extent at least, expected to arise. It is an English-speaking India He anticipates that the settlers and their descendants will "speak the English language in common with the bulk of the people." It is, moreover.—and this is a matter of yet greater surprise,—a Christian India He looks to it being raised to a level with "other large Christian empires," and speaks of England and India as prospectively "two free and Christian countries "united by resemblance of religion." It is, in a word, "generally Anglicized India—possessing the opulence, intelligence and public spirit and also the language, religion, and manners of the English race." [1]

"The Last Will and Testament"—Her Final Move

Miss Collet thus concludes her enthusiastic appeal to the Brahmos and Christians, completely laying aside her mask, and, in unequivocal language, calling upon us Indians to accept the Trinitarian Christianity which she advocates, turning even Rammohun himself, (who presented a wall impenetrable against the Christianization of India by the Trinitarian missionaries of his day,—Messrs Carey and Marshman, Serampore,) into, as she says, "if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint, of the change that is to come." [2] I have already

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun p 208
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Miss Collet's Rammohun, p 240

said that for the bulk of our Indian people to be "English-speaking," "Anglicized in manners" and "Christianized," without their attaining to "the opulence, intelligence, and public spirit" of the Englishman, would convert India into a vast *Chunagullee*, which no Indian can possibly desire, far less could Rammohun Roy, the father of New India O for the irony of fate, that Rammohun himself, the prophet of Indian nationalism, should, by her bigotry, be perverted into the prophetic type of Indian denationalisation, and that a section of the Brahmo Somaj of Rammohun, should enter into a conspiracy with her against Keshub who came in the fulness of time, to render Rammohun's spirit manifest to the world Miss Collet thus makes her enthusiastic appeal to us "He (Rammohun) had been throughout a consistent advocate for Europeanizing the Hindu intellect, and the Hindu civilization. The whole forecast (regarding European colonisation) bears the appearance of being genuine and in good faith."[1] "The founder of the Brahmo Somaj did anticipate the eventual Christianization of India' If so, need it necessarily be the Trinitarian Christianity of the sects? "This is a fact," says she, "the significance of which ought to be at no time overlooked either by Brahmos or Christians"[2] It is thus an open call upon her Indian supporters, the Protest leaders of the Brahmo Somaj, to relinquish Brahmoism and lead the way by their acceptance of the "Evangelical religion" by the Indian people, to which, she says, "Reverends W Jay, and Richard Warner declare him (Rammohun) a signal convert"[3] This then was why the "Brahmo Somaj was uppermost in her heart and mind," this then was why she "completely identified herself with it in interest!"[4] Miss Collet's rapturous flight rises to a

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Miss Collet's Rammohun, p 209.
[2] *Ibid*, p 210 [3] *Ibid*, p 231 [4] *Ibid*, p XXXII

climax, when she says about the "Remarks on European Settlement":—

> "This is the last publication of Rammohun Roy. His career as author closes with this truly colossal outlook The document may not unfitly be held to embody the Last Will and Testament of Rammohun Roy to the people of India,—holding up to them the prospect of India speaking English, India Christian, India socially Anglicised," etc

The enthusiastic Anglican, that she was, she concludes her dream with the prayer:—

> "May these large hopes of the first Brahman who visited the English capital be reverently remembered!"[1]

What was the truth about Rammohun's religious faith in his last days, in England? First of all, the reader should note that the "Remarks on European Settlement," was written on the 14th July, 1832,[2] and that Rammohun died, September, 27, 1833, *i.e.*, more than a year after, so that he had ample time to publish to the world the fact, (at least for the benefit of the Indian people for whom he laboured as the faithful shepherd, devoting to their service even the last drop of his blood,) if his faith had really undergone any change. It is not also correct to call the 'Remarks" the "Last Will and Testament of Rammohnn Roy."[3] "An account of the system of religion which prevailed in Central India," in the time of Alexander the Great, was translated by Rammohun, and sent to Mrs Woodford, August, 22nd 1833[4] (The fact is, that, somehow or other, it appears that after the publication of Rammohun's "Precepts of Jesus as the Guide to Peace and Happiness," in 1820, if not before, Rammohun was often spoken of by the Christian missionaries as a Christian.[5]

[1] *Ibid*, p 210. [2] *Ibid*, p 205 [3] *Ibid*, p. 210
[4] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun" p 129
[5] *Ibid*, pp. 30, 31 For the Missionary Register for September 1816,

Rammohun had been styled, while still in India, by Sismondi in the "Revenue Encyclopedique" for 1824, as the "Apostle of Christianity"[1] Even to-day the Brahmos are identified with Unitarian Christians, and looked upon as Christians, in England It seems to have been so from the day that Rammohun joined in the worship of the Unitarian Church of the late Revd Mr Adam, who was made a convert to Unitarianism by himself The nickname of *Kristan* given to the Brahmos by the uneducated classes, even of our own country also seems to date from the days that Raja Rammohun Roy began his purely Theistic propaganda in India Now, as for Rammohun longing to see the bulk of the people of India, "professing Christianity or to see India as a "free and Christian country," as the "Remarks on the Settlement of Europeans in India, 14th July, 1832,"[2] would show,—where is the proof that he meant anything more than Unitarian Christianity, or even anything more than the Brahmoism of to-day, which, as we all know, is often identified by the masses, even in our own country, with Christianity? Indeed to make out Rammohun, who was always so merciless in his criticism of the doctrines of the Trinity, the Immaculate birth, and the Atonement,—to make him out "to lean increasingly towards fellowship with Anglicans," or to be "a signal convert" to the "Evangelical Religion," and then to make that vapoury phantom of the imagination, the foundation for a castle in the air, regarding Rammohun's "theological transition" in the direction of the Anglican Church, "which lasted," she says, "all his life," but "was left incomplete at his death," argues a more than human degree of brass in Miss Collet's mental constitution! How flimsy her grounds for such

p 370 says Rammohun "studied our Bible in English, and in consequence became a Christian"

[1] *Ibid*, pp 20, 21 [2] *Ibid*, p 118

a supposition ? What were those grounds ? Says Miss Collet: "His first Sunday in England was typical. He divided his attendance between Unitarian and Anglican Churches [1] In fact the balance seemed latterly to turn in favour of the Anglican. It was no Unitarian divine, but the Rev Dr Kenny, the Established incumbent of St. Olaves, Southwark, whom Rammohun Roy came to style "his parish priest" [2] She fancies that she drives the nail home hammering at it, by contrasting it with Rammohun's "Answer of a Hindu to the question · 'Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship, instead of the numerously attended established churches ?" also written about 1823,[3] saying "There is a dash of humour about the fact of the author of 'Reasons for frequenting a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended established churches' coming round in the end to style an Established clergyman his 'parish priest' [4] One fails to notice any humour in it when one reflects on the reason assigned, as she quotes it, or if there is any humour it rather lies in the boldness of her own perversion of the plain truth regarding the Raja, for polemical ends, making out the prophet of Indian nationalism into a prophet of Indian denationalisation! As if mere reiteration could make up for the lack of reasons, Miss Collet thrice repeats this one point about his styling Dr. Kenny as his parish priest. Says she "We have seen him lean increasingly towards

[1] Dr Carpenter says "I was his companion in his first attendance on Unitarian Worship in London, and in the evening I conducted him to the crowded meeting of our Association where the enlightened Brahmin was welcomed as a fellow-labourer" At that meeting Rammohun in his reply condemned Trinitarianism for "laying a stress on mystery and mystical points which serve to delude their followers' Miss Collet very conveniently ignores these remarks of Dr Carpenter *Vide* Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, p 91, and Collet's Rammohun, p 189

[2] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 189

[3] Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works, p 201

[4] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, pp. 189–190.

fellowship with Anglicans, claiming an Anglican clergyman as his 'parish priest'."[1]

What were the facts on which she bases all these, to us, startling conclusions? Miss Collet has nothing to adduce in her support, in a matter of such grave importance, from Rammohun's own writings She merely says, "Reverends W Jay and Richard Warner did, we have seen, declare him (Rammohun) a signal convert to Evangelical religion"[2] Who was Mr Jay? And what was his ground for this allegation made, for aught we know, long after Rammohun was gone. The Revd W Jay was minister of Bath, whom Rammohun never for once mentioned by name, in his writings This Mr Jay said in 1843, about 10 years after the Raja's death, that the Raja attended his chapel, when he preached a sermon on the 17th June, 1832, and wished to print the sermon "From subsequent intercourse, as well as the testimony of others," says Mr. Jay, he was "persuaded that though at his first embracing Christianity he was Unitarian in his views, he was, after he came to this country, a sincere and earnest enquirer after *evangelical truth*" Who was Mr. Warner, and what is his testimony? Another chance acquaintance of whom also Rammohun makes a mention, the minister of Great Chalfield, Wilts, who, in dedicating his sermon on 'Charity' to the Raja in 1832, "extolled the Raja" "for the labours in which he exercised himself for the diffusion of the Light of Christianity and the promotion of Evangelical love among a hundred millions of his countrymen,"[3] and, who signed himself "Your friend and brother in Christ" Let the reader judge whether such equivocal and interested testimony, of chance acquaintances, like the "Reverends W. Jay and R Warner," are to be set off against Rammohun's

[1] *Ibid*, p 235
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Miss Collet's Rammohun, p 231
[3] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, pp 223, 224

own written and spoken testimony Miss Collet would even make capital of the bare surmises of the treacherous S Arnot, the Raja's Secretary in England, "after allowance has been made for his one distorting motive," —who says "He evidently now began to suspect that the Unitarian form of Christianity was too much rationalized (or sophisticated perhaps, I may say) to be suitable to human nature He remarked in the Unitarians a want of that fervour of zeal and devotion, found among other sects "[1] This very man "Sandford Arnot," says Miss Collet, "insisted that during the last period of his life, his manners were much changed and the powers of his mind seemed to be decaying," and "that change," she herself thinks, "may have been due only to Arnot's disappointed rapacity "[2] This Arnot, wrote the Sanskrit Scholar H. H Wilson "threatened Rammohun, if not paid, . . to claim as his own writing, all that Rammohun published in England "[3] Let the reader himself now say, if such vague surmises as these, coming from interested chance acquaintances and disappointed creditors, can have any weight in leading us to the conclusion of Rammohun "leaning increasingly towards fellowship with Anglicans "[4]

Now let us turn to the Revd Dr Lant Carpenter for evidence regarding Rammohun's faith when in England. None can be a better authority regarding Rammohun's life and changes of opinion, if any, during the latter's stay in England, than the man who "was his companion in his first attendance on Unitarian worship in London, and who in the evening conducted him to the crowded meeting of our Association,"[5] (The British and Foreign Unitarian Association),—the man, who, when Rammohun lay in his death bed, "almost every day, if not

[1] *Ibid*, p. 234 [2] *Ibid*, p 220
[3] *Ibid*, p 220. [4] *Ibid*, pp 234, 235.
[5] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p 91.

daily, had friendly intercourse "[1] with him, the man, with whose family he dined during his period of pecuniary embarrassment. Miss Collet herself says. "Owing to the lack of remittances from India, Rammohun, who had previously 'refrained from dining with Englishmen' was compelled from sheer necessity to dine with the Carpenters "[2] Regarding his attendance on public worship, Dr. Lant Carpenter says:—

> "While in London, he repeatedly attended the worship of the Unitarians at their different chapels in or near the metropolis and he twice attended their anniversary meetings (between his landing in England on April 1831, and his death in September 1833), but it was his system to avoid so far identifying himself with any religious body, as to make himself answerable for their acts and opinions,[3] and he also wished to hear preachers of other denominations who had acquired a just celebrity He appears to have most frequented the Church of the Revd Dr Kenny (St Olaves, Southwark), who peculiarly interested him by the Christian spirit and influences of his discourses "[4]

If Rammohun merely "came to style" (humourously or seriously, we have no means of knowing, and Miss Collet also does not assure us, though upon second thought she makes her expression stronger by saying, "claiming "[5] for "coming to style") the Rev Dr. Kenny "his parish priest,"—which taken literally would mean the clergyman of the church of the parish in which Rammohun then resided,—what is there in that to justify the conclusion, which Miss Collet draws in all seriousness, that Rammohun began to "lean increasingly towards the fellowship with Anglicans," or to justify

[1] *Ibid*, p 147
[2] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 221
[3] *Ibid*, p 201 Miss Collet too speaks of Rammohun's "constant watchfulness and sensitive regard to Indian criticism"
[4] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p 100
[5] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 235

any conclusion beyond that of Rammohun having a personal regard and liking for Dr. Kenny, for his broad sympathies and 'Christian spirit'? To compare small things with great, I often attended the St. Paul's Cathedral, when in London, listening with delight to the sermons of Canon Linden, and sometimes I attended the Bayswater Anglican Church, which was within our parish, and close to our quarters Does it justify any conclusion that I began then 'to lean increasingly towards fellowship with Anglicans'? With such logic-chopping you might make out anybody to be anything! And what truth is there in Miss Collet saying, with regard to Rammohun's attendance at the public places of worship,—that "in fact the balance seemed latterly to turn in favour of the Anglican"[1] She adduces no evidence whatsoever. On the contrary, it is well-known that Rammohun spent the last month of his life with the Carpenters and their Unitarian friends at Bristol, never giving a moment's thought to Dr Kenny, whom she seriously makes out to be "his parish priest." "Early in the month of September, 1833," says Miss Carpenter, "the Raja Rammohun Roy arrived at Stapleton Grove, near Bristol,"[2] which belonged to a member of the Unitarian congregation of Dr Carpenter. While at Bristol, it appears that Dr Carpenter had friendly intercourse with him almost every day. Before Rammohun left this world, says Miss Carpenter, "In the House of Prayer, where Dr. Carpenter officiated, Lewin's Mead Chapel, the Raja worshipped on two successive Sundays, the last he was to spend on earth, in the public services of religion."[3]

Thus in his last days, Rammohun, so long as he was able to attend Church, attended the Unitarian Church, even as he attended the Unitarian chapel of

[1] *Ibid*, pp 188, 189.
[2] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p. 146.
[3] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p. 148.

the Rev. Mr. Adam in Calcutta, in 1828, though in spirit he always had that catholicity in the germ, which was to be manifest as the New Dispensation of Keshub Chunder, about half a century after Dr. Carpenter himself remarks "He intended visiting other places of worship, as he had done in London, his spirit being truly catholic."[1] As regards his faith, therefore, there is no reason whatever to think that there was any material change, from what he himself assured the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, on his first arrival in England, in April, 1831, saying "With respect to your faith I may observe, that I too believe in the One God, and that I believe in almost all the doctrines that you do."[2] Before his death, it is said that "a large party was invited to meet the Raja at Stapleton Grove, on the 11th September,"[3] *i e*, a fortnight before the Raja's departure, and Dr Carpenter reports his own impression, and that of other distinguished "gentlemen, who were present," at that meeting, which shows that the Raja believed in his last days in England, what he believed in 1820, when he wrote his Precepts of Jesus, saying "Jesus is of course justly termed and esteemed a Saviour, for having instructed men in the Divine will and law, never before so fully revealed,"[4] "in the divine authority of Christ, as an inspired teacher of righteousness, and an accredited messenger from God," and that "he believed in the resurrection of Christ.'[5] It also appears from the journal of Mr. Estlin, who was then a constant visitor, that on the 9th September, the Raja "distinctly asserted his belief in the divine mission of Christ," and again that the Raja "had denied the divinity of Christ, but

[1] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," 149
[2] *Ibid*, p. 97 [3] *Ibid*, p 151
[4] Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works, pp 605, 606.
[5] Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p 156.

not of his commission."[1] Thus it is clear that there was no change worth notice in Rammohun's faith, during his residence in England, or if any, it was only in the direction of the Unitarianism of Dr. Channing, from whom the Raja may have accepted the belief in the resurrection of Christ,—the Raja having himself written to Miss Kiddell at Bristol, on June 22, 1833, sending a present of a volume of "sermons preached by Dr. Channing," which he said, "I prize very highly." Miss Collet's uncharitable remarks, full of innuendos, on the reports of Rammohun's most trusted Unitarian friends, such as the Revd Dr Lant Carpenter himself, "who," Rammohun wrote, February 7th 1833, "truly stands very high in my estimation,"[2] as a "pious and true minister of the Gospel,"[3]—are a sufficient indication of Miss Collet's bigotry, partiality, and jealousy of the Unitarians. They are quite sufficient for us, Brahmos, to discredit all her fanciful surmises, and not to set any value upon her self-deluding suppositions that Rammohun was "leaning increasingly towards fellowship with Anglicans," even though her Reverends W. Jay and Richard Warner did declare him "a signal convert"[4] to the "Evangelical Religion" In her ill-concealed jealousy of the Unitarians, she passes the most uncharitable and spiteful strictures on the Unitarian family of the Carpenters of Bristol who had done so much to make Rammohun's last days, under the greatest pecuniary embarrassment, comfortable and peaceful, for Miss Collet says "One menace to the tranquility of his stay at the Grove was perhaps offered by the religious eagerness of the hospitable circle in which he moved They showed no slight desire to secure from him a confession of Christian faith"[5] thereby hinting that the

[1] *Ibid*, pp 158 159 [2] *Ibid*, p 136 [3] *Ibid*, p 140
[4] See pages 180, 184, 188, 222, 231, 232, and 237,—Sarkar's Edition of Miss Collet's Rammohun Roy
[5] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 222.

Carpenter actually teased the Raja to the death so as to extract from him by force a confession of the Unitarian faith Such then was Miss Collet, the so-called "well-known historian of the Brahmo Somaj," of whom Mr Sarkar says "The Brahmo Somaj never had a warmer friend and more sincere well-wisher." Self interest is always blind!

The Alliance of "the Cripple and the Blind"

The reader should see that we Brahmos, those of the Sadharan Somaj in particular, are on the horns of a dilemma. We are bound on the one hand either to say that Miss Collet whether deliberately or not, misunderstands or at least misrepresents Rammohun's Brahmic catholicity when she speaks of him as on the way to accept "Evangelical Christianity," or making what a friend of mine calls, an asymptotic advance towards it, though he was "no Evangelical Christian, like Mr Kenny or Mr. Jay"[1]; or, on the other hand we are bound to say with Miss Collet that he was, "if not the prophetic type at least the precursive hint of the change that is to come,"[2] (a change in the direction of 'the eventual Christianization of India,"[3] with her type of "Evengelical Christianity," or of the Europeanisation of India in language, religion, and manners), and that he was the friend and supporter of the Indigo-planters of Bengal of his day,[4] the harrowing accounts of whose oppression of the people, still make one's hair stand on end Thus presented, we are afraid, the Raja becomes unworthy to be looked upon either as the founder of our Brahmo Somaj, or as the Father of New India. We have the personal testimony of no less a personage than

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 235
[2] " " " " p. 240.
[3] " " " " p. 210
[4] " " " " p. 155.

the Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter,—in whose family he lived in his last days, almost as a member of the family,—against all these baseless surmises of Miss Collet, that, to the end of his life, Rammohun was a Hindu Unitarian very much the same as a Brahmo of to-day, looking upon "Jesus Christ as an inspired teacher of righteousness and an accredited messenger from God,"[1] the same that Rammohun was when he prayed, ten years before he founded the Brahmo Somaj, 'that a day may soon arrive, when religion shall not be a cause of difference between man and man, and when every one will regard the Precepts of Jesus as the sole guide to peace and happiness,"[2] who was at the same time a Hindu to the core of his heart, hesitating, even in his death bed, to allow "Miss Hare to attend him constantly," saying, "it would be very improper,"[3] who was, to the very last, "careful to avoid everything that could be construed into an act exposing him to the loss of caste," even wearing "his Brahminical thread over the left shoulder, and under the right, like a skein of common brown thread,"[4] in all this "his motive" being, as Dr. Carpenter testifies, "not any lingering attachment to the superstitions of his country," "but a desire to avoid everything which might impair his usefulness among his countrymen, or diminish the influence of his teachings."[5] He was all his life, what Keshub Chunder called him, "the eclectic genius, commingling in that early stage of Indian reformation the monotheistic theology of primitive Hinduism with the high standard of Christian life and holiness enjoined in the Gospel of Christ."[6] So great was the solicitude, even in his last days, not to be mistaken for even a Unitarian Christian, pure and

1 Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun," p 156
2 Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, p. 671
3 Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, p 161 and p. 76.
4 Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. 226
5 Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, p 77.
6 Keshub's New Dispensation, Vol I, p 279.

simple, not to speak of an Anglican, that he left a positive injunction upon his attendants, that he was to be buried without Christian observances, while at the same time "he adhered to all Brahminical customs which, in his opinion, did not savour of idolatry" [1] Dr Carpenter also adds "The Raja manifested solicitude to preserve his caste, with a view both to his usefulness, and to the security of his property." [2]

Such then, was our Rammohun, national to the core of his heart, yet universal and catholic, unwilling to hand over our reason "to the traditions of ancient nations," [3] and at the same time also unwilling as early as 1823, to look upon the reason alone as "a surer guide." He thus states the grounds of his opposition to rationalism pure and undiluted, as a basis of religion, —"we soon find how incompetent it is alone to conduct us to the object of our pursuit," adding perhaps for the benefit of those of us who would lay on mere reason a heavier burden that it can safely be trusted with, "we often find that instead of facilitating our endeavours or clearing up our perplexities, it only serves to generate a universal doubt, incompatible with principles on which our comfort and happiness mainly depend." [4] And Rammohun was esteemed even in England as an 'excellent Indian Christian and philosopher." [5] It is doing the greatest injustice to the man, who, even in 1820, believed the Apostles of Christ to be infallible when they speak from "inspiration," [6] to say

1 Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, pp 170, 178
2 *Ibid*, p 168
3 Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, p 37.
4 Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, p 37
5 Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, p 67
6 Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works pp 483, 484 —"Some require from him who claims the title of Christian, only an adherence to the doctrines of Christ, as taught by himself, without insisting on implicit confidence in those of the Apostles, as being, except when speaking from inspiration, like other men, liable to mistake and error' Compare Bhagvat X, 22—33 to 35.

like Miss Collet, that "at the outset his Theism was intellectually not far from the Deism of the last century," or that "his faith seemed to differ little from the fictitious 'natural religion' of the eighteenth century philosophers"[1] As early as 1823, he was for "relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power,"[2] and for building up our hope on "Divine Providence and human exertions"[3] Though always a Vedantist to the core of his heart following what he calls the "conclusive verdict of the most revered commentator," "the most revered Sankaracharya," "in his interpretation of the doctrines of the Vedanta, which are real *adwaita* or non-duality,"[4] his sympathies are always catholic and broad as the sky, for he says "Amongst foreigners, those Europeans who believe God to be in every sense one, and worship Him alone in spirit and who extend their benevolence to man, as the highest service to God, should be regarded by us with affection, on the ground of the object of their worship being the same as ours."[5] With an Universalism in perfect harmony with his nationalism, he publishes, for the benefit of his countrymen, "the Precepts of Jesus," which he considered to be the "sole guide to peace and happiness," "hoping the best effects from the promulgation of this simple code of religion and morality"[6] Such was our Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Somaj in the Lord, if not from the day of his retirement from Government Service in 1814, at the age forty-two, at least from the day of his publication of the "Precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness," in 1820, and from the day of his co-operation with the Rev Adam, for the propagation of Unitarianism in India

This man, Miss Collet represents to have been, in

1 Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p 237
2 Panini Edition of Rammohun's English Works, p 37
3 *Ibid*, pp 45, 46.
4 *Ibid*, p. 96.
5 *Ibid*, pp. 211, 212.
6 *Ibid*, p. 485.

those days, "not far from the Deism of the last century."[1] The man whose faith in Divine Providence was strong enough to remove mountains, who "relied on the goodness of the Almighty Power which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestly and diligently seek for," even as early as when he published his Kena Upanishad in 1823,—the man who had faith in "what is most consistent with the laws of nature, and conformable to the dictates of human reason and divine revelation",[2] who had faith in the "words of Christ" as a "simple code of religion and morality, so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of God,"[3] as early as ten years before he founded the Brahmo Somaj, the man or more truly the prophet, whose heart longed for the time, "when religion shall not be a cause of difference between man and man," as if in anticipation of the advent of Keshub's New Dispensation,—it is quite clear what that man was when in India, that did he continue to be, despite the charge of an asymptotic movement of apostasy against him, by Miss Collet, that did he continue to be, even till the day of his ascension, at Bristol, in 1833, when he declared that he "believed in the Divine mission of Jesus Christ but denied the Divinity of Christ"[4] Such then was the grandfather of our Brahmo Somaj whom Miss Collet misrepresents as "leaning increasingly towards fellowship with Anglicans"[5] To destroy evidence against her case, Miss Collet had even the impudence to deny the authenticity of the Autobiographical Sketch of himself, that Rammohun had written in 1832—"just before he went to France,"[6] *i. e.*, only

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. 237
[2] Panini Edition of Rammohun's Works, p 484 [3] *Ibid*, p 485.
[4] Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, pp. 158, 159
[5] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, pp. 234 and 235.
[6] Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, pp 22 and 125

three months after he had written his 'Remarks on European Settlement,' though that autobiographical sketch carries in itself the unimpeachable internal evidence, that it could have been written by no one else, in those days, for publication in the "Athenaeum" and the "Literary Gazette" of the day. As it was, Miss Collet had the impudence to call that and the biographical sketch spurious though accepted as an authority as early as 1866 by Miss Carpenter herself. Though Miss Collet gives no reason, it is not difficult to imagine what her real reason, for calling it spurious, was. In that document written three months after the 'Remarks,' Rammohun had explicitly said: "The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to Brahminism, but to a perversion of it."[1] In saying so, Rammohun was merely repeating what he had said in 1817, in his "Defence of Hindu Theism": "The doctrines of the unity of God are real Hinduism The superstitious practices which deform the Hindu religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its (the Vedanta's) dictates"[2] Thus it cut away the very ground from under her feet, for making out Rammohun to have been "if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint" of "an English speaking India," "a Christian India," a "generally Anglicised India" Indeed the Autobiographical Sketch, considering its date, better deserves to be styled the Last Will and Testament of the Raja, than the "Remarks" So much for the fairness of Miss Collet.

All this practically lays bare before us the very core of Miss Collet's heart, whom Mr. Hem Chandra Sarkar, calls "the greatest authority on the contemporary history of this (Brahmo) movement," whom "the Brahmos (of Mr. Sarkar's type) felt to be one of them-

[1] Carpenter's Last Days of Rammohun, p. 25.
[2] Panini Edition of Rammohun's works, p. 90

selves." Is it difficult now to realise her true motive in taking the degree of interest, extraordinary for any one outside the Brahmo Somaj, that she actually took in the Cooch Behar affairs? Her hope was that when Keshub was dethroned, the Brahmoism of the Somaj would soon drift into mere considerations of expediency, degenerating at last into a lifeless calculating Deism, lacking devotional fervour, which in no time would exhaust itself, and work out its own death. How far the present condition of the Brahmo Somaj justifies such an anticipation, I leave the reader to judge With Keshub's Brahmoism "built on the rock of True Faith," thus gone, and Rammohun's mummy which she could manipulate, and safely make to speak as she prompted, —more conveniently than she could any living man,— seated on his throne, India, she thought would some day become "English-speaking," "Christianized," and "Anglicised" Does not this explain the hand-in-glove relation between that Anglican Christian lady and the leaders of the Protest movement of 1878? Some of the Protest leaders had already been known to be doing their level best to 'Anglicise' our manners,—as many are still trying to do,—and this might have deluded that poor lady into the hope that, for a beginning, the Anglicising of the manners of the Indian people, promised to be the first step to the complete realisation of her ultimate object, and that having Rammohun for a name to conjure with, may be good enough for a common meeting-ground between herself and the Protest leaders. The Anglicism of their manners, no doubt, drew to her heart, her "well-known and long-esteemed friends, Mr. A M. Bose of Calcutta and Dr P. K Roy of Dacca,"—and with them those shoals of semi-political and semi-religious deists among the youngsters of those days, who affected their Euro-Asian ways But Indians, Anglicised and Christianised, "without the wealth, intelligence, the public spirit, and the superior know-

ledge, scientific, mechanical, and political,"[1] of the Englishman, meant, as I have said, all India transformed into a vast *Chunagullee* with the "language, religion, and manners," and to boot the meanness and mendacity of *Chunagulee*! But it was impossible that the Father of Indian politics, Mr A. M. Bose, should relish such an idea. So that after all, the hand-in-glove relation between the Protest leaders on the one hand and Miss Collet on the other, was more or less unreal, or only very superficial Miss Collet's fervent hope that India would be Christianized and Anglicised, when Rammohun's spirit, such as she deluded herself into thinking it was, came in the ascendant,—no Indian, with even a grain of regard for the interest of his country, and for her ancient learning and traditions,—much less one of India's golden twins in the political field of those days, like Mr. A. M Bose, could subscribe to But poor Miss Collet failed to realise the situation fully, and being a powerful writer threw herself into the fray and began, somewhat recklessly, though most effectively, to wield her pen against Keshub Chunder which if it did not serve her own purposes, did wonderfully serve the purposes of her Indian allies From time to time she wrote brief summaries of the chief events, in connection with the Cooch Behar Marriage, which were published in the London *Inquirer*. The *Indian Mirror* (Aug. 11), in its turn, accused her of "identifying herself with one side only," because of her article entitled "The Sadharan Brahmo Somaj" (July 6). The protest from the *Mirror* made Miss Collet realise the limitations of her position as a foreigner, situated many thousand miles away from the scene of events. She says "To represent *all* the facts and principles of a movement is what no distant foreigner can ever hope to do, though, of course, I have made that my endeavour." She was then

[1] Panini Edition of Rammohun's works, pp. 316, 318.

like the blind man in the Sankhya parable of the "Pangvandha" or the "cripple and the blind,"—used in illustration of the relation between the Subject and the Object, or between Purusha and Prakriti, in Sankhya metaphysics,—standing in need of the Sankhya's cripple Miss Collet with her powerful pen was but like the blind with all the strength and sinews of a prize fighter, but without the eyes to see Her vigorous and facile pen, by itself, like the sound and strong limbs of the blind prize-fighter, was of no use to her for undermining the reputation and influence of Keshub Chunder, either in England or in India, of no use to her for the evisceration of Keshub Chunder of the Brahmo Somaj of India, of no use to her for making out the long-dead Rammohun, whom she could safely paint as she liked, to be the prophet of the "Christianization and Europeanisation" of India

The Allies in the Alliance

Miss Collet, as we see, could do nothing without the help of people on the spot, who would lend her the use of their eyes She stood in need of the proverbial cripple,—the *Pangu* of the *Sankhya* philosophers Her "well-known and long-esteemed friends, Mr A. M. Bose of Calcutta and Dr P. K Roy of Dacca" who sent her "letters and papers," offered to do for her, through their agents, the duty of the Sankhya cripple or *Pangu* Of course, in this combination, though they had apparently a common rallying point in the evisceration of Keshub and a cementing principle in the use of the name of Rammohun Roy to conjure with, *each party had really its own axe to grind* Miss Collet's ulterior object was the "Christianization," and "Europeanisation" of India, as the reader has seen; for her the evisceration of Keshub was only a means to an end. What was the motive of the other party? To grab the

"power in the realm" to which, Dr. Duff testified, Keshub had raised the Brahmo Somaj. The evisceration of Keshub was thus to them the end in itself. How were they to do it? The Protest leaders, without Miss Collet, were merely a body of Lilliputians, in the Brahmo Somaj, bent upon tackling a Gulliver. They were shrewd enough to realise that the easiest way for them was to enter as early as possible into a league with a powerful advocate of their cause, in England, for it would be much easier to convince ignorant foreigners, who had no true idea of Hindu idolatry or caste, and were not directly interested in the Brahmo Somaj in India, that Keshub had been guilty of encouraging idolatry and caste, than the most discriminating among their own countrymen Our Unitarian friends, too, who were really interested in the question, conscious of the limitations of their position, as distant foreigners, thought it would be too mean to take a part, in such an alliance. Though the Unitarians and Theists of England alone were really interested in the question, it thus came to happen that a Trinitarian lady, like Miss Collet, came forward to help the Protest leaders, the two together forming that "grotesque combination" of the blind and the cripple What though in deference to their objection Keshub wanted to retire immediately after the Cooch Behar Marriage? In the height of their vindictive insolence, they would not let him retire, they wished to dismiss him in disgrace. It was thus quite clear, that the motive for their action, was not any conscientious "consensus of opinion, both as to the marriage itself and the plea of Adesh (or divine command), set up in its defence,"[1] as Miss Collet put it For if that were so, the agitation in England and in India too, was altogether uncalled for, and if it were true that Keshub would not retire, even when asked by

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1878, p. 6.

the majority of the congregation to do so, the courts were open for them. In any case, campaigning among people unconnected with the community, and that on a point of conscience, was a novel phenomenon in church-history. If the decision of the court went against the Protesters as in the Wolverhampton case among English Unitarians in 1846, they had simply to form a separate congregation with their own minister But that would not help them to grab the "power in the realm" which was their goal. Indeed the object of the Protest leaders, though they themselves failed to realise it, was really suicidal, for to have Keshub shorn of all his influence both in India and in England, would spell death to the Brahmo religious body collectively, and to the Protesters themselves as Brahmos individually, for Keshub's power and influence was entirely his own and by its nature not transferable In the blindness of their rage, however, they were determined to step into Keshub's shoes, to be decked with Keshub's feathers, though it should mean death to the Somaj as a truly religious body and to every Brahmo individually, as members of a truly religious body. Out of such unreliable materials as the drolleries and hearsays of the *Sarasapakshi*, Miss Collet was able to manufacture a case, apparently so strong, that Mr Sarkar could with pride, say of Miss Collet's Year Book for 1878, "that it will remain as the fullest source for the history of the second schism in the Brahmo Somaj."[1] The more shame to us, Brahmos,—the men on the spot, if it should be so! With what marvellous success did that singular combination of the extreme Anglican, with the extreme Deist and Rationalist, ply a sort of see-saw between England and India! The success achieved, at least for a time, was so great, that Miss Collet could with cool self-complacence delude herself into thinking—"That Mr. Sen's

[1] Sarkar's Edition of Collet's Rammohun, p. XXVII.

teaching has ceased to be Brahmic; that the great majority of Brahmos have ceased to accept it; and that such a two-fold fact is final!"[1]

[1] Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year Book," 1881, p. 133.

CHAPTER V

THE SADHARAN BRAHMO SOMAJ

Religion and Politics

Our review of the History of the Brahmo Somaj where it ceased to deal with Keshub left, as it were, the sanctified circle of true religion, drawn away by so-called *Political Rights, Philosophy* and *Social Reform* Let me here dwell on these by way of introducing the topic under discussion—Bijoy Krishna Goswami and the Sadharan Somaj

Politics as it goes to-day means more or less the assertion of the rights and interests of yourself and your party. Religion means to be poor in spirit, to be meek, to be pure in heart to hunger after righteousness, to sacrifice and encourage others to sacrifice their own rights and interests in the discharge of their duties to their fellowmen The two temperaments required are quite different —self-asserting, word-fencing for the lawyer and politician, and self-effacement for the man of religion The spheres of work of the two are more or less the antipodes to each other The politician dabbling in religion, and the religious man dabbling in politics,—except within certain limits, cannot but be pernicious for the community,—and they themselves cannot but feel like fish out of water Indeed one defect of our Bengal politics, as well as of our Bengal religion, is that in both the *principle* with us is secondary, and the *person* primary It will be news to many to know what a large number of our Sadharan Brahmo Somaj leaders were dabblers in politics The effect of this

confusion of politics and religion is that there is no genuineness either in our religion or in our politics, so that in politics such leaders are third-rate politicians, and in religion such leaders are fourth-rate men of religion[1].

The spirit of swagger and irreverent defiance and challenge seems still so rampant among some of the Somaj leaders of to-day, who seem to be puffed up with their pride of philosophy, that it is hoping against hope to expect much consideration from them for the opinions of even the universally recognised evangelists of our gospel of Brahmoism Yet it is hoped that by the grace of God the spirit of humility and good sense will prevail with us at last, and we shall cast off our conceit of philosophy as something unclean and deceitful,—bearing in mind the words of St Paul—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy."[2] So says Emerson also—"Our theism is a purification of the soul," and not a philosophy The so-called philosophy, unless it is the handmaid of direct God-vision, is mere sceptical groping in the dark, which instead of purifying rather hardens the heart with conceit disqualifying us from seeing God It tends to cause spiritual death, as the Gita says —"*Samsayatma Vinashyati*" Philosophy in the sense of the somersaults of the intellect should, therefore, have a very subordinate place in Brahmoism, which Keshub says "stands on the rock of intuition" in the sense of direct God-vision and Inspiration Our

[1] Keshub, as the man of religion thus deplores the predominance of the idea of rights in the Somaj, instead of the idea of the duty of love, in one of his prayers, as early as June, 3 1872 —"The husband thinks that the wife is bound to serve him, the wife thinks she has full rights over the earnings of the husband. It is this deep-rooted feeling in the heart, regarding their rights over each other, which has turned our world into a hell O Father, when the husband removes the wants of the wife, that there is in it Thy Special Providence always present, and likewise when the wife renders services to her husband, that there is Thy tender love present in it,—this our low idea of rights does not allow us to realise"

[2] St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, II–8.

Brahmoism "stands on the rock of Intuition" in the sense of the voice of our whole human nature, our heart, soul and mind, and not on the logical faculty or the intellect alone The Maharshi—who could hold his own against Kant's 'Antinomies of Cosmology', writing on the margin of his Kant "What shall I do with that knowledge which does not help me to find Thee?" —the Maharshi who could fence with his dialectics against no less a fencing-master than Akshaya Kumar, the prince of Bengal agnostics,—was a philosopher of no mean order, and yet says he —"Who can find the All-holy? He alone who has faith can find Him. Without faith and love who can enter that Holy of Holies?"[1] (Upadesh 15). "O Soul of souls while I am hearing Thy words, why should I go to listen to others?"[2] (Upadesh 12) Again, says the Maharshi —

> "Brahmoism is a spiritual religion the religion of the soul Beware that none of you look upon Brahmoism as a means of securing honor and distinction This Brahmoism of ours is the means of attaining God; it is the means of casting off honour and distinction, it is our means for withstanding every kind of calamity"[3]— Upadesh 3

As early as 1872, Keshub said in his prayers — "Conceit is at this time our greatest malady". "Lord I have seen that when I lose faith, everything dries up" "We pray that as we say (intellectually) 'Thou art,' so may we realise it in our hearts, so may we be guided by it in our actions"

Pt. B. K Goswami and the Beginnings of Sadharan Somaj

Keshub, we have seen, meant by the Brahmo Somaj, the "Congregation or body of regular worshippers" If

[1] Maharshi's Mashik Upadesh, No. 15 [2] *Ibid* No. 12
[3] Maharshi's Mashik Upadesh, No 3.

the Brahmo Somaj still stands where it did in the days of its Evangelists, its primary object and its ideal is worship None but those who are spiritually hungry and thirsty, and actually belong to the regular body of worshippers can be Brahmos If our Sadharan Somaj is to be reckoned as a Brahmo Somaj, then, in that sense none but Pt Bijoy Krishna, whom even his inveterate opponent styles as "the first missionary of the Brahmo Somaj after Mr Sen," deserved to be called our leader, when the Sadharan Somaj was founded in 1878. Even the Protest leaders Messrs. Das, Bose and Shastri, *thought it expedient to exhibit the Goswami* before the public, as the first man of the Sadharan Somaj in 1878 This may be presumed from the fact of his heading the lists of membership of all the Committees of 1878 [1] Yet Pt Shastri, in his History, published in 1911, ignores and excludes Goswami saying :— "At the time of its foundation, the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj was headed by three men—Ananda Mohan Bose, Shiv Chandra Deb and Umesh Chandra Datta" [2] Mr. Shiv Chandra was a good man, but an ornamental figure-head, already past three-score and ten at that time. Umesh Chandra was a well-known *Kartabhaja* of the school of Nabin Babu of Colutola, to whom, we learn, on reliable authority, Pt Shastri too, used occasionally to resort He was a good man and was a very useful tool in the hands of Pt. Shastri Mr. Ananda Mohan who was already making his mark, as a leader in the political history of India, had no personal ambition to be reckoned as the founder of a religious body, but he was a chum of Pt Shastri, they being both initiated by Keshub in 1869, and he longed to see his chum (rejected by the Brahmo Somaj of India as ineligible for ministry of the Somaj for a well-known cause) seated on the throne of their common Guru,

[1] Brahmo Public Opinion, May 23, and August 1, 1878.
[2] Shastri's H B S, Vol II, p 119

Keshub Chunder Sen. Thus stripped of its verbiage Pt. Shastri's meaning, nakedly put, is that he would wish it to be recognised that he himself, with the aid of Mr. A M Bose, was the founder of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj But Mr. S. R Das, on the other hand, claims apparently with some truth, that his father, Mr. Durga Mohan Das, was one of the founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, saying—"I am a son of one of the Founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj "[1] Indeed if Sadharan Brahmoism means primarily social reform and feminism, then Mr Das who led, what Pt Shastri calls, the Female Emancipation Movement of 1870, and who was by far the most generous among the organisers, should certainly be recognised, if not as *the* founder, at least as one of the founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj

I, for one, on the other hand, hold that Sadharan Brahmoism, too, is a "purification of the soul," a spiritual religion. and I maintain that the Sadharan Somaj owes its existence to Pt Bijoy Krishna Goswami, who like a comet shot across our sky from another,—from Keshub's band of the faithful. It is not a passing thought of the moment with me,—for I remember, four or five years after the foundation of the Sadharan Somaj, Sir Alfred Croft, the then Director of Public Instruction of Bengal, asked me in the course of a conversation,—who was the leader of the Sadharan Somaj? In giving my reply I first thought of naming Mr Ananda Mohan Bose, but the name seemed to stick in my throat, because it would not be true. A practising lawyer and politician is inconceivable as the leader of a religious body,—for though politics in its own sphere is divine, and as a political leader we looked upon Mr. A M Bose as a messenger of God, yet politics is politics, and religion is religion Whom, then, could I name as our leader?

[1] Indian Messenger, April 29, 1917.

The Ex-Head Pundit of the Hare School was not to me a name presentable before the public, or before the Director of Public Instruction, as the Founder of our Brahmo Somaj Whom then could I name as the leader of our Sadharan Somaj ? I might indeed with truth have named Messrs. Das and Bose as the founders of the Sadharan Somaj, if I looked upon it as a body of social reformers on European lines But as I happened to cherish the superstition, or what Pt Shastri calls "the erroneous conception," of looking upon the Brahmo Somaj as primarily a spiritual body of "the regular worshippers" of God, I at last said in reply, that the founder of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj was Pt. Bijoy Krishna Goswami

Leaving out Shiv Chandra and Umesh Chandra from Pt. Shastri's Trio we have only Ananda Mohan left. To this we must couple Pt. Shastri's name. Then comes the name of Sj. Durga Mohan Das claimed as one of the founders by his son Mr. S. R Das Thus we have a fresh Trinity Messrs Das, Bose, and Shastri. Why is there no mention of Pt. Goswami by Pt. Shastri as one among the Founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj ?

Pt. B K Goswami's Resignation

What is the reason of this deliberate omission of the name of Pt. Bijoy Krishna on the part of Pt Shastri, in his "History" published in 1911 ? What made him fight shy of the Goswami and ignore him ? As early as 1881, that is, only three years after the foundation of the Sadharan Somaj, the Ex-Head Pundit of the Hare School had a fling at the Goswami, as having in him "too much of the sentimental and the mystical," as having "formerly belonged to Mr. Sen's party" He had also a fling at the Goswami and his *Bhakti* party or school of devotion, in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, "on account of their free and frequent use of the name

of Hari."[1] What would Pt. Shastri's school say if one thought that they were using the Goswami merely as a cat's-paw and just as long as the necessity existed? By 1886 they realised that Keshub was long gone, and his followers were weakened by being divided among themselves Our leaders thought they would run no risk, if they disperse his flock of his *Bhakti* school in the Sadharan Somaj.—most of the true theists of the Sadharan Somaj regarding themselves as belonging to the flock of the Goswami The Deistic school always bore a secret grudge against the Goswami, as giving too much prominence to devotion and spiritual discipline, and too little to the Europeanisation of our manners and morals Equally intolerable to some of our leaders was the fact that so long as the Goswami was in the field, there was no chance of anybody else to be reckoned as the first man of the Sadharan Somaj. Once rid of the discordant voice of the Goswami, Messrs Bose and Shastri hoped to have their process of Europeanisation in full swing As regards social morality Pt Goswami was also decidedly of the same opinion as Keshub that "the holiest relationship should always subsist between man and woman, without the least measure of liberty incompatible with their spiritual interests"[2] Probably, it was mainly because of the presence of the Goswami among us, that the feminists did not obtain the concession they longed for After Keshub had gone it was quite natural for the feminists, with their high-priest Pt Shastri, to be on the look out for an opportunity to throw the Goswami overboard. That much-longed-for opportunity at last presented itself as we shall now see

[1] Pt Shastri's N D & S B S, pp 52, 48

[2] Keshub had most earnestly entreated the leaders of all the Brahmo Somajes scattered over the country to do all in their power to check and put down all attempts to introduce laxity in the relations of the sexes *Vide Sri Durbarer Nirdharana*, 9th Aswin, 1879.

In 1886, a friend of our *Brahmo Niketan* days, a Doctor of Sylhet, Kailash Ch. Chakravarti (Bagchi), addressed a letter to the Secretary objecting to the use of *Harinam*, particularly of that Bengali hymn—"*Man ekbar Hari bol*," etc I was then in the General Committee and heard that letter read before us. The camp-followers of the Deistic School *carried a Resolution, by a majority of votes, that Harinam should not be taken from the pulpit in the future* Less than a month after this meeting (General Committee) I found that the Goswami left the Sadharan Somaj Mission House, and was in Dr Ducowri Ghosh's house in Sukea Street. What actually happened in the interval was kept a strict secret But what transpired was that the Resolution condemning *Harinam* was communicated to the Goswami, who standing for the freedom of his conscience *at once submitted his resignation of the ministry of the Somaj*, for when I communicated to him the result of that Meeting proscribing *Harinam*, he told me that he could not then sit on the pulpit of the Somaj [1] Was this Harinam Resolution the forging of a weapon in anticipation ? It is difficult to say whether the Resolution was entirely a makeshift, and solely directed against the Goswami For not six months before, I myself heard a sermon from the pulpit of the Sadharan Somaj calling upon the Congregation to repeat the name of *Hari* and there was not a soul who saw the least objection in it. Anyway Messrs Bose and Shastri seem to have realised that their own reputation with the public would be endangered if they accepted the Goswami's

[1] The following extracts, translated by me, from Chapter X of "Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami," contains in substance the main facts as reported in the *Tattwa Kaumudi* of 1886 —"Some members of the Sadharan Somaj objected to his (Goswami's) method of work When the Goswami realised that some mischief was brewing, he voluntarily submitted on (*Chaitra* 10th, *Sana* 1292) A D 1886, his resignation of the post of missionary of the Somaj, to the Executive Committee ' See B B Kar's "Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami," First edition, pp. 259, 260.

resignation on the flimsy ground of his use of *Harinam* from the Somaj pulpit They would not only make themselves unpopular but even ridiculous, as indicating Pt. Shastri's anxiety and indecent haste to become the first[1] man of the Sadharan Somaj by throwing his rival (then far superior to him in the popular estimation) out of his way, on such a frivolous question. They, therefore, had recourse to a dodge, that of withdrawal. Says Mr. B. B. Kar, the biographer of the Goswami —

> "When the members of the Executive Committee after discussing with him (Goswami) about his views and practices, requested him to *withdraw* that letter of resignation, he *at their request gave his approval for the withdrawal of the letter (of resignation).*"[2]

The Goswami believing in the sincerity of these men allowed his letter of resignation, which I presume was based on the embargo laid on the use of *Harinam*, to be withdrawn But though he withdrew his letter of resignation, the agitation against him was curiously kept up by the Executives; and it is said that, at the moment they were entreating the Goswami to withdraw his resignation, there were two letters still pending before the Committee against the Goswami[3]

What really was their object? If their objection to

[1] In the list of missionaries of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj given in the Annual Report for 1881, the name of Pundit Bijoy Krishna stands first The Annual Report of 1882 does not give the list of missionaries In the Annual Reports of 1883, 1884 and 1885, reporting the works of the missionaries, the Goswami's work is noticed first In the Annual Report for 1885 Pt Bijoy Krishna and not Mr Shastri ordains Babu Nogendra Nath Chatterji on the 25th June, as a missionary of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj While in the Annual Report of 1881 the list runs thus —Bijoy Krishna Goswami, Siva Nath Shastri and Ram Kumar Vidyaratna We find the following list in the Appendix A, Annual Report for 1886 —Siva Nath Shastri, Ram Kumar Vidyaratna, and Bijoy Krishna Goswami Is there no meaning in this change?

[2] B B Kar's "Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami," p 260 (1st Edition)

[3] B B Kar's 'Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami," p 260 "At

the Goswami's doctrines and methods of spiritual culture were *bonafide* why did not the Committee accept his resignation of March 22? Any gentleman would have done so in regard to his private servants, unless he suspected them to be guilty of some serious crime. Suppose they had made a mistake in regard to this resignation,—and nothing intentional,—why did they set in motion, so soon after, their engine of diplomacy by instituting an official enquiry on secret letters of protest against Goswami's views and methods of culture? Did not the Executive while making the "request" acquaint themselves *fully* with the Goswami's views? Then why this move? Is it not clear that their real object was to make out a case against the Goswami under the pretence of making an enquiry in regard to protest letters *which lay before them*, at the time the Goswami submitted his first resignation? Is it not clear that their object was to make out a *prima facie* case? If the Executive wished to act straightforwardly, all the protest letters pending should have been disposed of before they asked the Goswami to withdraw his letter of resignation What stroke of policy was it? Why were they taking action on letters of protest, of which the contents as well as the signatories they kept a secret from both the Goswami and the Brahmo public?

A frank and outspoken answer to these questions would expose to the public the constitution of our Sadharan Somaj It will show that the method of procedure adopted by the leaders of the Sadharan Somaj, regarding the removal of Goswami exhibits, as in a mirror, the perfectly bureaucratic constitution of the Sadharan Somaj. A greater and stricter secrecy has all along been maintained now as then, about the proceedings of

their request he permitted them to withdraw the resignation letter. The agitation, however, did not abate, rather the Executive Committee still had under consideration two more letters of protest

the Executive Committee, than that maintained in regard to any proceeding in a Government office under the Official Secrecy Act It was clearly the duty of the Committee to place the letter of resignation before the General Meeting of the Congregation, at least for an expression of their opinion, but it was never done The names of "*some members*" were not given out, neither the "*objections*" published As to the "*two letters of protest*" the Executive Committee did not let the members of the Congregation know what were those about and who wrote them *All these connected with the most vital points of doctrine of the Somaj* were not done, because they feared, the injustice and wrong they were doing, would in all probability have been exposed, and severely censured The much-vaunted creed of these men that—"No doctrine ought to be promulgated as a doctrine of the Somaj, which is not consented to by a majority of Brahmos," of 18th May, 1878, as well as their platitudes about "faith in human nature," was meant only for a show against Keshub Their dogmas and rules were meant to bind others, not themselves

However, before the Executive Committee had completed their proceedings, in connection with those secret letters of protest, it appears that the Goswami had a presentiment of their Jesuitical designs Seeing that the Committee was acting in the dark and not going to bring his case before the Brahmo public, the Goswami on the (31st of Baisakh, Saka 1808) 13th of May, 1886, published his *Humble Statement for Brahmo Friends—(Brahmo Bandhu diger prati Nivedana)*, as an appeal to the Brahmo public against the designs of the bureaucrats To enable the reader to grasp the whole situation I may be permitted to place before him the following translations of some extracts from Pt Bijoy Krishna's "*Humble Statement,*" which he will find given in full in Mr. Kar's biography of Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami:—

"Whatever is true is Brahmoism. Brahmoism is the universal religion There is no place for a sect in it. For this reason wherever I get truth, and whatever I realise to be true,—that I accept I am the slave of slaves of Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, the Navavidhan Somaj, the Adi Somaj, the Hindu, the Christian, and the Mahomedan Somaj I have no sect that is exclusively mine, yet all sects are mine That much of truth there is in any sect, that much is my Brahmoism there I give below a summary of my views The Creator of this infinite universe God, is the All-Truth, the All-Conscious the Infinite the All-Blissful, All-Peace, All-Good, free from old age, Immortal Eternal, the One without a second, and All-Holy He is Invisible that is, He has no special material form He is the Creator of all, and is not like any created thing He is self-determining and can be compared to nothing He is One only without a second,—there are not two gods in the Universe nor three nor many By whatever name a man calls on Him as God, calls on God Himself the One without a second Aiming at the Creator whether you call Him Brahma Allah, Khoda, Hari, Ram, Krishna, Kali or Durga there is not the least harm Some people say you may be misunderstood That also is not true For example the word Hari means a lion, a horse, a monkey and also God who cleanses our sins If a man aiming at God repeatedly utters Hari," and his heart becomes melted and tears run down his eyes, there is no man who will say then, that the fellow is calling on the monkey, or any other brute, and is shedding tears Again what is the harm to me personally, if another man makes a mistake about me! My God is the Ruler within, it is enough that He knows the truth The name by which you realise God is the best for you.... I have said before that God has no material form, and for that reason we call Him formless But he has a formless form, as the *Sachchidananda*, the All-True, All-Conscious and All-Bliss That form is realised by the eye of faith. By spiritual culture the eye of faith becomes developed For him whose body and mind are both pure, his eye of faith may develop of

itself; for many this happens. The worship of God means loving Him and doing His will If I really love Him, then whoever else loves Him and worships Him is my own, my greatest friend Therefore I go wherever He is worshipped and adored Wherever His name is chanted there I am happy to be present For this I seek for my Lord everywhere among Shaktas, Shaivas, Vaishnavas, Christians and Mahomedans Under many a tree, on many a hill, and river-bosom in many a temple of idols in many a *Musjid* and in many a *Church*, have I beheld my Lord face to face, bowed before Him and felt myself happy

"Radha-Krishna in our country is a spiritual allegory. I do not believe there is an ideal of worship or yoga, as high as this allegory symbolises Radha stands for the worshipper, *Bhakta*, Krishna stands for the Divinity, the object of worship, God Himself The Great Men,—Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed Chaitanya, Nanak, Kavir, Dhruva Prahlad, Narada, Janaka, and others are worthy of our reverence They may be realised in God, during worship ... God is the only *Guru* or spiritual teacher He is present everywhere as the *Guru* Through everything,—water, air fire, trees and creepers, rivers hills, planets and their satellites, insects, grubs, man,—the Guru of the world gives lessons It is necessary that our parents, teachers and other gurus should be reverenced It helps our religious growth if we bow to them, falling at their feet, prostrating ourselves to the ground It causes religious degradation if we pray to any man looking upon Him as God, or as His Incarnation, or as His Mediator. If it be desired to destroy our self-conceit, then for every man and every woman, it is specially helpful to take the dust of the feet The seed of piety does not sprout, till self-conceit is destroyed God Himself resides in every man or woman's heart as wisdom, love and power The practice of yoga means the effecting the union of the self with the Supreme Self, in wisdom, love and power The culture of yoga develops spiritual power in man All doubt ceases when this condition is reached"—31st Vaisakh, Saka, 1808,—May, 13th, 1886

Pundit Bijoy Krishna's faith in the fairness and equity of the procedure of the bureaucrats was however so completely shaken, that he had no difficulty in foreseeing that his "Humble Statement for Brahmo Friends," would not be submitted before the General Meeting of the Brahmos When he realised that they were determined to decide the case themselves without any reference to the General Meeting,—then within less than a week (five days) after submitting his "Humble Statement," he followed it up by *submitting another letter of resignation on the 4th of Jaishtha*, Saka, 1808, 17th May, 1886, which also gave a detailed statement of his religious opinions and disciplines To help the reader grasp the situation more fully, I also place before him the following translation of some extracts from the Goswami's *Second Letter* of resignation, of the post of the Minister —

> 'God, who is All-True All-Wise, All-Good, and Almighty, may be seen with the eye of the spirit, and that is the highest ideal of Brahmoism. Always to behold Him and enjoy Him with the other senses, when they are spiritually enlightened, in one word to realise Him, and be always absorbed in the sea of His presence, to do all one's duty, and spend one's whole life, in that state of absorption in God, is the ideal of Brahmoism. (1) Attaining Brahma in this sense is not possible by man's self-exertion, or self-culture alone Placing an absolute reliance upon His grace, if we worship Him, and discipline ourselves to the best of our power, such a condition is realised in the soul Therefore have I laid at his feet the entire charge of my religious life and followed for the last few years[1] the path of *yoga*-culture as He has directed As instructed by the saintly Ramkrishna *Paramhansa*, I have undertaken to teach that path for the benefit of anxious enquirers. (2) This discipline has no connection with anything external It is entirely a thing internal and spiritual, though many

[1] Referring to his life in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj.

have for a time to do *Pranayam* (breath-regulation) for the cleansing of the body[1] yet *Pranayam* is not included in our discipline (3) Seeing only the external *Pranayam*, outsiders may lose respect for the discipline itself. Therefore we do not practise *Pranayam* before outsiders (4) We take no notice of the distinction of sects (5) In our discipline there is not the least trace of *Guruism* God Himself is the Guru here, all others are mere instruments, and employed by him to show the path. Just as He varies His teaching by using trees and creepers, planets and their satellites and hills, as the means, so also does He give religious instruction by using man as a means For this reason we acknowledge all things including man also, as our *Guru* The power of yoga exists potentially in all men, to rouse it to action the help of some man, in whom that power is in fuller action, is required Even without such help very earnest enquirers, for whom the other circumstances are favourable. may directly have the Divine Power roused in them But such cases are very rare, so that, as a rule, human help is essential, in the same way as we require another's help in removing a mote from our eye,—though eye-sight itself is a Divine gift (6) Like our parents and other *Gurus* the religious teachers too should be given our deep and loving regard We do not prohibit the taking of the dust of the feet That feeling of humility in which the spirit desires to take the dust of the feet, is lovely and beneficial Therefore when I see another is benefited I do not object to his taking the dust of my feet I too take the dust of the feet of all Whenever any one bows to me, I immediately say—'Glory to the Guru,' 'Glory to the Guru'—to mean that it is due to the Universal *Guru* Not a single salutation do I accept myself (7) We do not

[1] *Pranayam*, in the *Patanjal yoga* of eight parts, is a *Bahiranga Sadhana* or external discipline, coming next after posture (*asana*) Shankara in the Brahma Sutra calls it an external discipline, though in *Svetasvatara Bhashya* he says (though it may be a different Shankara) —"*Pranayamaikshapi tamalasya chittam Brahmani sthitam bhavati*"—"The mind cleansed of mental uncleanness by Pranayama or breath-regulation, becomes settled down in Brahma"

think it right to eat the refuse-food of others It may lead to the chance of our getting all kinds of infections; in addition to that, it may also cause spiritual deterioration, as proved by experience But when parents or other *Gurus* offer something from their plate as a mark of blessing if these things are eaten, there is no harm (8) If Brahma reveals himself to me in the temple of an idol, or before the very presence of Kali, Durga, or some other idol, I lose myself there, and think myself happy to bow to my God whom I worship, or even to roll in the ground there[1] My God is omnipresent, therefore wherever I behold Him, I am transported with joy, and never bestow a thought about the place (9) The worshipper may call on God by any name, Kali, or Durga, there is no harm in that Therefore do I call on God by whatever name at any time gives satisfaction to my soul But in conducting the worship in the Brahmo Somaj, I do not remember to have ever used these names (Kali, Durga, etc) anywhere. Nor do I think it right to do so in these days (10) It is my belief that there is nothing so helpful to piety and yoga or communion as the idea symbolised in the relation of Radha-Krishna,—Radha being the worshipper (Bhakta), and Krishna being God, the Divine Person worshipped But in conducting worship in the *Brahma Mandir*, I never took those names Nor do I think it right to do so in these days"

The Goswami concludes his letter of resignation in the following words :—

"I believe that whatever is true is Brahmoism and that truth may be found in all mankind For this reason, I think Brahmoism to be the universal religion God is one, so also His religion is one There is no party or sect in true religion That Pure Truth,—

[1] In those days this often happened in the Kali's temple at Dakshineswar in the company of the great saint—the famous *Paramhansa*. I often saw the *Paramhansa* coming to the Goswami at our house, sitting absorbed in contemplation,—sometimes singing, dancing, etc.—D. D

unsectarian Brahmoism, I am preaching, and that I do mean to preach I am the slave of slaves of all humanity, but am not to be identified with any separate party or sect" (The 4th Jyaistha, Saka 1808)

Three such letters in less than three months meant a tempest, then, in our little tea-pot of a Somaj The Executive Committee, *in the meanwhile*, had been also very busy They summoned the Goswami, who had gone to Dacca, to come over to Calcutta and appear before them This was, says Mr. B B. Kar, at the beginning of (*Jaistha*), *i e* on the 14th of May. They constituted a Sub-committee of five authorizing them to carry on an enquiry If the enquiry that was being made by these five were *bonafide*, the Goswami's *Humble Statement* and his Second Letter of Resignation were quite sufficient for the purpose But they took no notice of his statements nor do they seem to notice his second letter of resignation

I must say something about the *personnel* of the Sub-committee here The Sub-committee consisted of Messrs. A M Bose, S N Shastri, Navadwip Ch Das, Krishna Kumar Mitra and Adinath Chatterji It was a Sub-committee consisting of men no more competent to try the Goswami upon matters spiritual than was the Spanish Court of Inquisition to try Galileo on a question of astronomy The Rev Nogendranath Chatterji was not in it, nor the ex-missionary Babu Jadunath Chakravarti Babu Krishna Kumar was, then, a novice politician and a teacher at Mr A M Bose's City College, and Navadwip Babu and Adinath Babu were novice missionaries In a democratic country experts are tried by experts in the same line, not being rivals,—so that at least Nogendra Babu and Jadu Babu ought to have been in the Sub-committee

This Sub-committee asked the Goswami for an explanation of his conduct,—asked him to explain "his views and modes of culture," absolutely ignoring the fact that he had already done it, before they asked for

it, first in his *Humble Statement*, and then again in his *Second Letter of Resignation* But the Goswami had by this time found out what stuff that court of inquisition was made of, and like an honourable gentleman he "*declined to explain his views to Messrs. Bose and Shastri's Sub-committee*" The Sub-committee thus found itself checkmated—its occupation gone. Not that the accused refused to recognise the court, not that the Goswami was guilty of contempt of court; the analogy rather lay with the accused challenging the Jurors, for the Goswami had obeyed the summons of our court of inquisition Any fair-minded Judge would, under the circumstances, appoint new Jurors It was clearly the duty of the Executive to appoint another Sub-committee, or still better, to place the whole case, as it stood, before a General Meeting of the members of the Somaj. Or the Sub-committee when it realised that the accused —no less a man than the founder of the Somaj himself, had no confidence in them, ought to have resigned But the Executive Committee or Sub-committee—it all meant Bose and Shastri and Shastri and Bose, proceeded with greater zest to prepare a strong case against the Goswami by private enquiry made behind the back of the accused, his friends, and of the Brahmo public. The Sub-committee proceeds of its own motion to charge him with *Kartabhajaism*, of which, as we shall see, most of the Sadharan Somaj ministers and two of that Sub-committee of five were themselves then guilty. The foreman of that jury of a Sub-committee was a lawyer He knew it was illegal to take evidence behind the back of the accused, he knew that no charges could be framed upon mere hearsay,—from enquiry from friends Mr A M. Bose, the lawyer who eventually became a President of the Indian National Congress, shut his eyes, while Pundit Shastri who had been the Goswami's accuser from 1881, sits in judgment upon him in 1886. This Committee consist-

ing of Messrs Bose and Shastri and three of their lieutenants, of whom two were themselves *Kartabhajas*, submitted to the Executive Committee their report against the Goswami, bringing against him a number of charges which happen to be exactly what any ordinary Brahmo may bring against a *Kartabhaja*

Kartabhajaism IN THE SADHARAN SOMAJ

It will be an amazing revelation to most people, to be told, that we Brahmos of the Sadharan School of those days, after five or six years of our separation from Keshub Chunder, like railway wagons slipped from their engine coming to a standstill, felt such spiritual dryness or dulness, that we looked around us for something that might revive our spirits more effectively than mere prayer—more effectively than mere *Upasana* or worship in the sense of the love of God and His service Many of us with our leading ministers of the Sadharan Somaj, looked round for a short-cut, for something more external, more mechanical —some kind of what is known as *Hatha Yoga* as it is called, that would be to us a sort of easy transport to spiritual life, and became *Kartabhajas* And it was for this that the Goswami was made a scapegoat. To help the reader to grasp fully the charges of *Kartabhajaism*,— for the name is suppressed in the charges brought against the Goswami by the Executive Committee—it is essentially necessary that the reader should know something about this thing and how it came to take hold of some of the leaders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj

I will begin not with a leader but with myself. I learnt from my friend Babu Tarakishore Chowdhury, then a young leader of the Sadharan Somaj, a member of the Executive Committee of 1881 and a well-known canvasser against Keshub, one of Mr. Bose's employees in the City School, and a colleague of Babu Krishna

Kumar Mitra in the protest movement, that he had been greatly benefited by joining the *Kartabhajas*. I thought I too should join them, and I did so I then found two of the elders of the Sadharan Somaj were also *Kartabhajas*, our minister Babu Umesh Chandra Datta whom Pundit Shastri proclaims as one of the founders of the Sadharan Somaj, and Babu Kalinath Datta both hailing from Mazilpore, Pt Shastri's native village. Pundit Shastri was never a *Kartabhaja*, though he too used to give us demonstrations of Telepathy with a key, as early as 1877 He too was on very intimate terms with some of the *Kartabhaja* leaders A few days after me, Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, our present President, (1917) became a *Kartabhaja*

Babu Krishna Kumar's *Shakti Samchara* or 'breathing in of influence,' took place at our house, in Sitaram Ghosh Street I think about 1882 The influence of Sj. Tarakishore Chowdhury in those days was so paramount in the Sadharan Somaj, that, attracted by his example, the minister-in-chief, Pundit Bijoy Krishna Goswami, Sj. Nogendranath Chatterji Pundit Sitanath and last of all also Sj Navadwip Chandra Das joined the *Kartabhajas*. The others need not be named here. Suffice it to say, that the *Kartabhaja* element became extremely prevalent in the Sadharan Somaj in the early eighties. With the exception of Umesh Babu whose *guru* was Nobin Munsi, the rest of us had for our *guru*, Jagat Babu There are two sects among the *Kartabhajas*,—one then led by Nobin Babu, or the Ghoshpara sect, and another then led by Jagat Babu, which is rather a heretical branch, to which most of us of the Sadharan Somaj belonged Though as a sect it is confined to the Hindus *Kartabhajaism* seems originally to have come from a Mahomedan saint *Aulia*, the first *guru* known as *Karta*, whom the sect may be said to "worship," and who gives the name to the sect—*Kartabhaja*. It is a "Secret Society" somewhat in the style of an "Open Secret." The mystic

words told by the *Guru*, called *guru-mantra*, we are pledged to maintain as a secret; but there may be no harm in explaining the meaning The words are addressed not to God, but to *Aulia* as the *Karta* or master It means "Thou art me, and I am Thee," or unity-in-difference, or the unity of the self in all. They have a special culture or *sadhana* which cannot be more correctly described, than by simply repeating what Messrs Bose and Shastri's Sub-committee framed as charges against the Goswami alone .—

Charges against Goswami	*Remarks by the Author*
' Introducing a new system of religious discipline, such as performing devotional exercises in secret exercising breath-regulation (*pranayama*) imparting spiritual influence or *Shakti Samchara* prohibition of the eating of the remnant of what another has eaten, sanctioning the eating of fish but not of flesh,	Which we exactly did to Sj Krishna Kumar Mitra, at a secret sitting in our house.
Guruism in the sense of a belief in the need of a teacher, and accepting, *before examination*, as true, the words of good men (*sadhus*) and teachers (gurus), belief in the virtue of the dust of the feet;	The members of the Sub-committee all knew that the Goswami was a vegetarian.
the use of portraits and songs, etc, regarding the sports of Radha Krishna, addressing God as Kali, Durga, etc ;	Thus all Brahmos, who come from the Hindu Somaj believe more or less Pt Shastri belives in it Dr Piatt described what he saw — Many of the older girls came up to our venerable friend, Pt Shastri, and took the dust of his feet " At our sittings as *Karta-bhajas* any songs exciting deep feeling or *rasa* would be sung, the songs of *Radha* and *Kali* were always interpreted allegorically If the songs were passable, the portraits, too, were.

Charges against Goswami	*Remarks by the Author*
bowing *where the idols* were near;	Bowing to God, for no one ever alleged that the Goswami bowed to an idol This is a necessary consequence of the Brahmos becoming *Kartabhajas*—for most *Kartabhajas* were idolators, and also the Brahmo's intimacy with Ram Krishna Paramhansa of Dakshineshwara.
belief in strange powers	Though it is not a fixed doctrine of *Kartabhajaism* to believe in strange powers, *animadi siddhi*, it is expected that all Kartabhajas believe in the strange powers of their *guru Aulia*, and Nogendra Babu, our minister, publicly declared his faith in all kinds of strange and wild psychic phenomena Pundit Shastri, whom we knew as a spiritualist, before he became a fully equipped minister of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, in 1878, and even after, himself gave some demonstrations of psychic powers.

The Sub-committee further add that "a great deal too much is made about taking the dust of Bijoy Babu's feet, and about eating the remnant of Bijoy Babu's food."

Was this worthy of any serious notice? I well remember the change that had come upon the Sadharan Somaj in regard to taking the dust of one another's feet, at Sankirtans or chantings in a chorus, in the *Somaj Para*, in about 1884. I remember an apprentice-

missionary saying :—"What, will you not give us the dust of your feet ? How are sinners to be saved then ? " Was the poor Goswami, then, to be alone made the scapegoat, because some members of the Somaj went to excesses ? Again, should not these charges have been taken along with the Goswami's explanations given to Brahmos generally, in his Humble Statement and in his Second Letter of Resignation ? If the newness of a system of culture is to be the ground of objection, the General Meeting of the Brahmos, or the Congregation should be the judge, and neither the Sub-committee nor the Executive Committee. All the *Kartabhaja* ministers of the Sadharan Somaj—Umesh Chandra Datta, Nogendra Nath Chatterji and Navadwip Chandra Das should have been held equally guilty Indeed in the Controversy of 1878 Messrs Shastri and Bose proclaimed,—"No doctrine ought to be promulgated as a doctrine of the Somaj which is not consented to by a majority of Brahmos." In 1881 Pt Shastri without any reference to the votes of the majority called the Goswami's doctrines "erroneous conceptions "[1] In 1886 he and his party discard *Harinama* without reference to the votes of the majority, and ultimately get the Goswami himself banished In a matter like this bigotry should have no place, and if it should have any place, all the *Kartabhaja* ministers of our Somaj and not the Goswami alone should have been taken to task On the contrary the Goswami in his Humble Statement for Brahmo Friends, says, regarding the spiritual culture he advocates, that "it has no connection with anything external, it is entirely an internal or spiritual matter Only some people for the purification of their body, have to perform *pranayama* for a time " The Goswami's *pranayama* being admittedly entirely physical, the sting is taken out of it.

[1] Pt. Shastri's New Dispensation and the S. B. S., p 62

If the Goswami was to go, so ought Babus Umesh Chandra, Nogendra Nath,[1] and Navadwip Chandra to have gone

As above mentioned Pt Shastri before 1878, showed us some telepathic experiments with the key, and the *Kartabhajas'* influence-imparting (*samchara*) is but one form of that telepathic action The charge of *guruvada* read with the Goswami's explanation loses its force altogether, for says the Goswami,—"God is the only Guru Who teaches through all things" Again, is it right to make capital against the Goswami. out of our national custom of taking the dust of the feet of our parents, elders and teachers? The Goswami says :—

> 'It is necessary to show reverence to parents, etc., it is spiritually helpful to throw one's self at their feet, and to bow to them But it is spiritually hurtful to offer (to them) prayers looking upon any man as God, or His incarnation, or His mediator If one seriously desires to curb his pride, the taking of the dust of all men's feet is specially helpful .." We have no objection to the taking of the dust of the feet I too take the dust of the feet of every one Whenever any man bows to me immediately I utter "Glory to God the Teacher" looking upon the salutation as due to God alone 'I never appropriate a single salutation to myself"

Who would be so fastidious as to interfere with the free exercise of a man's discretion in such a case? As for

[1] Like the Theosophists, the *Kartabhajas* are not necessarily believers in a personal or super-personal God It is well-known that when the Maharshi was told that Babu Nogendra Nath Chatterji, missionary of the Sadharan Somaj, was "a member of the Theosophical Society,' exclaimed with a feeling of disgust —"Be it Nagendranath or whoever else it may be, this is my firm injunction to them — Either leave the company of God or leave the company of the Atheists there is no other middle path (See Ajit K Chukravarti's Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, p 599) ' The position of the *Kartabhaja* is perhaps similar, but entirely confined among the Hindus **He does not care about prayer or worship, nor need object to idol-worship.**

Radha-Krishna as an allegory we have said that as the Goswami has explained it, it is the Hindu version of the Christian parable of the ten virgins—"Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him" (Matthew XXV, 6), or the Pauranic version of the Upanishadic "*Yatha khalu priyaya striya, etc*" 'As a man embraced by his beloved wife, knows nothing without, nothing within, etc" The thinking classes always accepted the allegory of Radha-Krishna in this sense Indeed, in this matter, the Goswami was following more or less, in the footsteps of Keshub Chunder The "leopard spots" of the Benthamic school show themselves when they raise the question of the expediency or inexpediency of an 'ordinary member of the Sadharan Somaj entertaining these views, and following these disciplines," and "a missionary of the Goswami's rank whom the public reveres," entertaining and following them Did they mean to hint that those other ministers who lacked moral courage and yielded themselves as easy tools in Mr. Shastri's hands might stay, but the incorrigible Goswami must go? Did they mean to hint that though Babus Umesh Chandra, Nogendra Nath and Navadwip Chandra were guilty of the same offence as the Goswami, the Goswami as the leading minister, as their ringleader must go, and the others as ordinary ministers, might stay? The point here is one about the doctrines of the Somaj, in which there can be no respect for persons What is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the gander By the axiom of 1878, of our Sadharan Brahmoism, the doctrines and disciplines in question should have been before the General Meeting of the members of the Congregation, and they should have decided whether these doctrines and disciplines were passable or not, were injurious or not

The Executive Committee whose sole object, in making the enquiry was, what the lawyers call, to keep the file complete (*nathi durust*), after all the formalities

of a criminal trial had been gone through, when they received the report of the Sub-committee,—a document full of misrepresentations, exaggerations and slanders, instead of calling and placing the case before the General Meeting of the members, as they should have done, themselves passed final orders on it. Themselves acting as prosecutors, witnesses and judges—all three in one, they made the stains cast by the Sub-committee, blacker still by, adding a few more exaggerations, misrepresentations and perversions of the truth, taking absolutely no notice whatever of the explanations given by the Goswami on trial. What justice could the poor Goswami expect at the hands of Pt. Shastri, who as early as 1881, had accused him of "too much of the sentimental and mystical, and too little of the practical or philanthropic," who led the committee by the nose, and with indecent haste declared, "The Goswami's resignation is accepted." Fairness and equity—were they unknown to this Executive Committee?[1] And

[1] But I say this not with regard to the members of the Sadharan Somaj, for it was not the doing of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj. Indeed the Annual Report of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj for 1886, contains a veiled protest from the Secretary on behalf of the Sadharan Somaj, Dr. Ducowry Ghosh, whom I must credit with much greater candour than the 'Historian" of the Brahmo Somaj. Dr. Ghosh records the banishment of the Goswami saying that he has 'to record with deep regret the separation of Pundit Bijoy Krishna Goswami from us on account of certain differences of opinion *with the Executive Committee*." That was quite true. But our Historian perverts this fact when he says —"The cause of his (the Goswami's) separation was an unhappy difference that had sprung up between himself and *the members of the Somaj*," as if Messrs. Shastri and his tools was synonymous with the members of the Somaj. *That is like the Pope of the Sadharan Somaj that he was*. What fools must we be if we stand up for an oligarchy like this as a democracy, and say that a "democratic constitution has had a free growth and development, and is attaining perfection year after year in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj" (*Vide* Indian Messenger, July 1, 1917). With regard to the members of the Somaj I must, however, say that our timid, cringing nature makes us more fit to be the "dumb, driven cattle" of a bureaucracy that we Brahmos still are, than to be the "heroes in the strife" of a

these are the men who accused Keshub of introducing "a system of Popery!" What need had Messrs Shastri and Bose to place the case of the Goswami before the General Meeting of the members? They were the General Meeting—"*Le etat Cest moi!*" What did they care though Kalinath Datta of Mazilpore and Jadunath Chakravarti protested? The Goswami must go Neither he nor his supporters had come from the Indian Association, so they did not worry themselves by requisitioning a General Meeting of the members They had never dabbled in politics like many of the members of the Executive Committee, before becoming Brahmos So the matter ended *We began with pillorying Keshub in* 1878, *we pilloried Bijoy Krishna in* 1886, *we pilloried Ananda Mohan Bose in* 1904 *about the City College*; *lastly we almost brought to the pillory Pundit Shastri himself, in connection with his Sadhanasram* though unlike the rest he escaped scot-free,—with even the compliment of being called lately, the "*Incarnation of Brahmoism*" (*Brahmadharma Murtiman*)[1] Nemesis for our own *gurumara vidya* cannot be long in coming

The Report says that 'after much discussion, and by the votes of the majority (of the Executive Committee), the resignation of the Goswami was accepted,—with the cynical remark—"That the Executive Committee with deep regret accept the second letter of resignation of Srijukta Bijoy Krishna Goswami whom they all love and revere" "*They all love and revere!*" Did they? If they did,—then could not Pt. Shastri and his associates who found "social opinion" a sufficient safeguard against "all persons who indulge in wine," have seen their way to regard "social opinion" alone

democracy that every Brahmo should aspire to be in his own Brahmic *demos*

[1] Vide the *Tattvakaumudi*, Report of the *Abhinandan* proceedings of Saturday, April 7, 1917.

a sufficient safeguard against any possible error of judgment on the part of the Goswami,—the real founder of the Sadharan Somaj ? It was decided by the votes of the majority of the Executive Committee ! A case like the Goswami's, if decided by the *Sri Durbar* of Keshub, could only have been decided by the unanimous voice of the entire Durbar The grandfather of our Brahmo Somaj, Rammohun Roy, on the other hand, with his marvellous foresight and knowledge of human nature, laid down the lines of a bifurcation of authority, temporal and spiritual, each with well-defined duties, and each free in its own sphere, but both deriving their authority ultimately from the Congregation to which also they were both equally responsible Knowingly or unknowingly the Raja was following the system of Church-government which prevails in Unitarian Churches. This bifurcation saved the life of the dying Brahmo Somaj of Rammohun while its absence has well-nigh killed a living Brahmo Somaj, before our very eyes, by having placed the Somaj absolutely, under the heels of an imperialistic bureaucracy, called the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj Even to-day the cardinal feature in the system of Church-government of the Sadharan Somaj is the strange dodge of the Retiring Executive Committee submitting a list of their probable supporters as candidates fit for election, which practically amounts to their openly prompting the electors, from their present positions of influence in the Somaj, to elect their nominees and supporters (Subsidiary Rules, 3), so that no gentleman with a sense of self-respect, knowing that a vast amount of influence would be brought to bear against him, would like to volunteer himself as a candidate for election Thus their boasted democracy as a veritable bureaucracy,—the systematic destruction of the true principle of self-government, or the principle as Keshub explained it in 1865,—of "the members of the Somaj having the full-

est right to have their affairs managed according to their consciences."

I should also ask the reader to notice their exquisite spirit of misplaced banter! How they add insult to injury! The Annual Report of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj for 1886 says —The Executive Committee "expressed a hope that our revered brother (the Goswami) might soon be in a position to renew his connection with the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj" This, then, is what we do to our true leaders, the true fathers of our Church, with our sham "faith in democracy," and our sham "faith in human nature" But behold what the true democrats, our brethren overseas, the British Unitarians do for their leaders! At the Leeds Conference of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association of April 1888, (at which I was myself present, as the representative of the Brahmo Somaj, India) Dr. Martineau, bent with the weight and infirmities of age, delivered his speech on '*Church Organisation*,' and was so exhausted that when he sat down, he remained almost unconscious for a time. While he was in that condition a Resolution was unanimously passed by the Association for opening a mission at Oxford. When Dr Martineau recovered consciousness and came to know of it, he said to a friend that such a resolution could not be passed at that meeting. The chairman, Mr Armstrong, as soon as he came to know of Dr. Martineau's opinion, rose and with a look of despair said —"When Dr. Martineau is against it I am helpless." The whole audience more than a thousand souls, with downcast looks of regret, out of respect for their leader, unanimously quashed their own resolution The reader will thus see how a true democracy admires its leader and delights in honouring him, while a sham democracy, like that of our Sadharan Somaj, is jealous of their leader and delights in insulting him.

Lastly, it is well that we know the names of those who

formed the Executive Committee of 1886, by thus heaping insult upon the Goswami, and are still with us, some still in authority in the Somaj as before They are :—

Babu Adinath Chatterji
,, Heramba Chandra Maitra
,, Krishna Kumar Mitra
, Madhusudan Sen
Dr P K. Roy
Pt Sitanath Datta
,, Shivanath Shastri
,, Navadwip Ch. Das
Babu Shashi Bhushan Bose

Three of these gentlemen were themselves *Kartabhajas* at one time Babus Krishna Kumar Mitra, Sitanath Datta and Navadwip Chandra Das If there is the slightest spark of a truly democratic fire in our Sadharan Somaj, it should be a matter for serious consideration with us, whether the doors of the Sadharan Somaj Executive Committee should not be closed against these gentlemen

The Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj

A word here about the Executive Committee that still sits on our Sadharan Brahmo Somaj like a nightmare, in the name of church-government,—making havoc among the most revered ministers of the Somaj, so as to kill all spiritual life out of it. How did this monster come to have a place among us ? Where did it come from ? I will briefly suggest here the answers to these interesting queries, and, if practicable, go into a fuller discussion later on.

Church-government, as we notice it among the Unitarians of England or America, and as we had it here in India, under the *Maharshi* and the *Brahmananda*, is an extremely simple affair, if, of course, the organisers of

the church, have no sinister motive, or no motive of personal ambition. In the Romish Church, the Pope is the centre of all authority, and he rules through a hierarchy of cardinals and priests. In the Anglican or Episcopalian Church, the King as the Defender of the Faith, takes the place of the Pope, and rules through a hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and subordinate clergymen Among the Dissenters, the Scottish Presbyterians are governed by a General Assembly of experienced ministers (Presbyters) of the congregations It is indeed true, as we found it in the Brahmo Somaj in the sixties, and as it was also in the age of the apostles, that it is "the ministers who generally gather congregations of their own followers" about them That is true as much of Christianity as of our Brahmoism, so that the ministers are really the soul of both. Among the "Independents" of the days of Cromwell, however, the congregation began to rule itself selecting its own minister Milton's satire that "modern presbyter is old priest writ large," is an indication of the degradation of English Presbyterianism, which tried to make an unholy alliance with the Episcopalian Church. 'The Church," says Mr Walter Lloyd, "believed in the Divine right of the Presbyters, the Congregationals believed in the Divine right of the congregation."[1] In America matters even went to an extreme. "In the Congregational fold," says Mr G E. Ellis, "the ministers were the servants, at best the equals, of the members of their flock not their masters, or, in anything, their superiors." They had faith in their money, and would claim, like us, of the Sadharan Somaj, to rule over their ministers, saying to each other, "you pay your

[1] "The worship of our forefathers was apparently done practically by the minister alone The congregation had little or no part in it save to listen." **Presidential Address, 1912, American Unitarian Association**

money, but you do not take your choice." The Unitarians are Congregationalists, the congregation appointing its own minister, or asking him to retire, if he ceases to be acceptable. The Wolverhampton case of about 1816 is interesting as illustrating the extremely simple form of church-government among English Unitarians, as contrasted with the complicated wheel-within-wheel form of church-government of the Sadharan Somaj The Wolverhampton congregation, which had been Trinitarian before became Unitarian "In 1813, a minister was appointed whose views accorded with those of the congregation He was appointed for three years, but at the end of that time he had changed his opinions, and preached Trinitarianism The trustees wished him to retire but he refused to do so, and remained in possession of the chapel for some years" When the case went up to the court, 'the Vice-chancellor gave decree adverse to the Unitarians" [1]

It is easy to imagine how and by whom the charges brought against the Goswami, would have been dealt with, if the Goswami were the minister of an Unitarian chapel in England If the Goswami had been an English Unitarian minister, his congregation would have openly asked him to retire, if they thought that he had changed his opinion, like the Wolverhampton minister. For the Executive Committee to remove him, by taking action upon secret protest letters, without the slightest reference to his congregation, would seem most outrageous to any Unitarian Speaking of the American "Unitarian body," Mr. Ellis says: "There is no controlling authority to shape its growth. It is a collection of free churches, making their own organization, calling their own minister, settling him after their own fashion, determining what forms or lack of forms they will have, what charities they will support, what contributions they will

[1] Walter Lloyd British and Foreign Unitarian Association, p. 84

make to the common weal."[1] The Unitarians are our English Brahmos, and the Brahmos are their Indian Unitarians Keshub Chunder's idea was more or less that of our Unitarian brethren whether of England or America. As early as 1865, while still in the Calcutta Somaj, he said "The members of the Somaj had the fullest right to have their affairs managed according to their consciences",—which he repeated in 1869, saying: "Let the direction of the affairs of the Church rest in the hands of the congregation" This he re-affirmed again and again, in 1878 and after Add to this that in 1864, while he was still in the Calcutta Somaj, Keshub also proposed for "a Representative Assembly to consist of the representatives of the different Brahmo Somajes scattered over the land, having for its object the adoption of various means for the spread of Brahmoism and for the cementing of the bonds of union among the Brahmo Somajes in India."[2] I should here draw the attention of those of our friends who slander the Maharshi charging him with favouring "autocracy or oligarchy,"[3] the close similarity of the constitution of the Calcutta Somaj of 1864, under the Maharshi[4] with that of the American Unitarian Association[5] in 1912 The objects of both the British and Foreign Unitarian Association of England, and of the American Unitarian Association, are exactly the same as those of Keshub's contemplated Representative Assembly of 1864, while in the Calcutta Somaj Speaking of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, says Walter Lloyd

1 G E Ellis on "Unitarianism," p 358
2 A K Chakravarti's Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, p 364
3 See "Indian Messenger," July 1, 1917
4 A K Chakravarti's Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, p 362
5 Like the General Meeting of the members of the congregation, electing their President, Directors (*Adhyakshya*), Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Treasurer of the Calcutta Somaj, at their annual meeting, in 1864, the American Unitarian Association also at their annual meeting in 1912, elect the President, Vice-president, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Directors

"For nearly three quarters of a century the Association has been the rallying point of Unitarians at home and abroad It has assisted ministers and congregations from its funds, it has defended the civil rights of Unitarians, it has contributed to the erection and repair of chapels It has never had, nor attempted to exercise ecclesiastical functions, though it has occasionally assisted congregations and ministers by its advice"

Again says he —

'The great advantage of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is that it is not an ecclesiastical organisation of churches or ministers." It has "helped specially to sustain the efforts of ministers and the missionary work of Unitarianism"[1]

If Keshub's ideal of the Representative Assembly of the Brahmo Somajes had been realised, we should have had something like the 'British and Foreign' among us, and our Brahmo Somaj should not have been a languishing body, as it is to-day, lagging far behind her younger sisters of the Arya Somaj, or of the Theosophical Society Ananda Mohan, who in those early days was as Keshub's own beloved brother in 1870, was proud to protest against, what he called, "most disingenuous attacks on Mr Sen in the correspondence columns of the *Daily News* (London), ' saying that "Mr Sen will outlive the petty darts of these assailants"[2] After his return from England, he revived Keshub's proposal of a Representative Assembly, and Keshub, too, gave him his hearty support, himself consenting to be the President of its Executive Committee, when it came into existence in 1877 If that ideal had been realised, if Ananda Mohan had taken Keshub as his mentor in the matter of Church-government, instead of Pundit Shastri, it would have been a glorious day for our

[1] Walter Lloyd British and Foreign Unitarian Association p. 209–11
[2] H C Sarkar's "Ananda Mohan Bose,' pp 28, 29.

Brahmo Somaj, and we should have had both our congregations and our ministers free and self-governing, and also co-operating with each other in the common interests of our Brahmo Somaj, without the nightmare of an all-powerful Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj as now, to throttle it to the death we should have had side by side with our Brahmo Somajes an assembly of the genuine Representatives of all the Brahmo Somajes, forming an "auxiliary" body to protect and further the interests of the Brahmo Somaj and of the Brahmos by rendering help wherever, and in whatever form, required But, alas, that was not to be

From 1878, an evil genius seems to have been in the ascendant in our Somaj Ananda Mohan threw himself unreservedly into the arms of Pundit Shastri who until the Cooch Behar Marriage furnished him with a handle, had been wandering about the outskirts of the Brahmo Somaj like an Ishmaelite but now became the guide, philosopher and friend' of Ananda Mohan The truth must be told They seemed both agreed in one thing, they seemed both to have hankered after power Says Pundit Shastri, letting the cat out of the bag —

> "The Representative Assembly (of 1877) was instituted with the distinct provision that it would be only an auxiliary of the Brahmo Somaj of India, and not a body exercising control over its affairs" 'Its position as an *auxiliary* body was distinctly laid down by Mr Sen, and in fact that was the condition upon which he consented to aid," what Pundit Shastri calls, 'the *samadarshi* party in organising it The latter accepted that condition as the first concession towards the introduction of the constitutional principle of government in the affairs of the church"[1]

"License they mean," said Milton, regarding men of his own party "when they cry liberty." Pundit Shastri

[1] Pt. Shastri's H B.S. Vol I, p. 267

then hankered after power; a mere "auxiliary body" like the British and Foreign Unitarian Association would not satisfy him "*Sansargajadosh-gunah bhavante*"—good or evil qualities are acquired from company Possibly therefore Ananda Mohan was of the same mind as Pundit Shastri *As a matter of fact, however, neither Mr. Bose nor Pundit Shastri really belonged to the body of regular worshippers of the Brahmo Somaj of India of those days To that I can personally testify,* as I was then one of the regular body of worshippers of the Somaj Mr Mozoomdar also notes that "they gradually ceased to attend the services of the Brahma Mandir"[1] Should they then control the Brahmo Somaj of India? They were angry with Mr. Sen, because he would not sanction such an usurpation And these are the men who raised the equivocal cry of "the constitutional principle of government," which may mean anything, or nothing

It is explicitly stated that 'The objects of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj are to introduce a constitutional organization in the Brahmo Somaj, to do all works in connection with the Somaj by securing the representation of the views of the general Brahmo public, and the Brahmo Somajes' This was adopted as a resolution at the public meeting held on the 9th September, 1878 Its object then was not to see that each individual Brahmo Somaj governed itself "To do all works in connection with the Somaj"—reading between the lines implies somebody behind. Our "wish was father to the thought" We foolishly thought that it meant the introduction of the democratic principle of government in the Somaj, and gave them our hearty support. By their Rule 36 of 19th September 1878, insisting that "the members of the Executive Committee, and at least 15 members of the General Committee must be

[1] Mozoomdar's "Life and Teachings of K. C. Sen," pp. 149-50,

anusthanic Brahmos residing in Calcutta" they laid the axe at the very root of the democratic form of Church-government, for a democracy with its rule of "Freedom, Fraternity and Equality" would never allow a *privileged* class, like our *anusthanics* in its *demos* A democracy commits suicide if it lays down preferential conditions to restrict the free choice of its demos in the election of representatives What is the practical effect of the condition that "the members of the Executive Committee and at least 15 out of 40 of the members of the General Committee," are to be men who "ordinarily reside in Calcutta or its vicinity ?" In those days there could not be altogether more than 25 *anusthanic* Brahmos eligible as representatives and willing to be elected, who belong to the Sadharan Somaj and ordinarily reside in Calcutta and its vicinity, and the bulk of these 25, (I say 25 from my personal knowledge of those days) were connected with Mr A M Bose either as master and servant from then belonging to the staff of the City School and College, or as colleagues in the Managing Committee of the institution I should ask the reader to say what could be the practical effect of that preferential limitation Did it not follow necessarily that both the Executive Committee as well as the General Committee of the Sadharan Somaj would consist of Mr. Bose's own men so as to make them a sort of nucleus of the Cabinet Council in the Somaj with Mr Bose as the uncrowned King and Pundit Shastri as his Prime Minister ? Like Adam tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree, some of us by their connection with the City School, were lucky enough to have a taste of the stolen sweets of bureaucratic despotism, as mere tools in the hands of the College authorities, and as a consequence, we are still so inebriated thereby as to be ready to distort history saying.—"It may be truly said of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj that its founders did not see its true nature as clearly as we

do," and pervert facts by ascribing what may be in our own brains the ideal of the "Brahmo public managing the Somaj according to their lights."[1] The Annual Report of the Sadharan Somaj for 1880 does indeed say "It is no longer a church of this man, or that man, of this body or that body, but it is a commonwealth," and this is now become a common cant in the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj. But going into evidence, however, one finds that it is mere bluff The case of the Goswami, the reader has seen, gives such dogmatism the lie direct.

It is absolutely false to say that the Sadharan Somaj ever supported the principles of a truly democratic government of the Church Going over the old records and rules of the Sadharan Somaj, one would certainly be convinced that they meant nothing of that kind. The Cooch Behar Marriage offered the opportunity for our leaders to strike for power, and they took full advantage of it At once they wound up the Representative Assembly or *Pratinidhi Sabha* of 1877,—for they could reach their goal of grabbing the governing power of the Somaj in other ways, more effectively and with greater certainty, than by means of the Representative Assembly They could realise their aim better by establishing their half-religious and half-political Brahmo Somaj manned by the then leaders of that political body—the Indian Association, as we now have it before us, and for this they set about in right earnest What could they take for a model for that semi-religious, semi-political body,—*for a model for that* Sadharan Somaj to be ? If their object were merely to "preserve the purity of Brahmoism," as they represented it to be to the Maharshi, it would have been quite sufficient for them to have followed the example of the Wolverhampton Unitarians of 1816, who, when they found that

[1] See "Indian Messenger" July 1, 1917

their minister refused to retire when the trustees wished him to do so, (and that was also Keshub's position in 1878 as the protesters alleged, though not with truth), and "the Vice-chancellor gave a decree adverse to the Unitarians," "with the majority of the trustees, built another chapel" But the leaders of our Sadharan Somaj, were nursed in the school of politics in the Indian Association Mere self-abnegation of that type would not do, for, as we have shown, they longed for power to exercise control over the congregations, and their ministers If their object were merely "to help to sustain the efforts of ministers and the missionary work" of Brahmoism, to be "the rallying point" of Brahmos 'at home and abroad," to "assist ministers and congregations" from their funds, to "defend the civil rights' of Brahmos or to 'contribute to the erection and repair" of *Brahma Mandirs*, they could have followed the lead of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, by further improving and developing their Representative Assembly of 1877, which Messrs Bose and Shastri in co-operation with Mr Sen, had founded, or rather revived. But that would not help them to reach their goal, that would not give them power "to exercise control" over the congregations and their ministers *That their actions were not directed merely by honest scruples of conscience regarding the conduct of Keshub at the Cooch Behar Marriage*, appears from the fact that even when they had practically ejected Keshub from the Brahmo Somaj, they began a course of chapel-grabbing or "appropriation" of *Brahma Mandirs*, or the capturing of congregations by ejecting from them, by shrewd machinations, those ministers who had actually gathered round themselves those congregations or founded those Mandirs, merely because those ministers would not go with them against Keshub A notable case, that which created some sensation in its day, was that of the Rev. Bhai Banga Chandra, whom they

ruthlessly ejected from his congregation of the Eastern Bengal Brahmo Somaj of Dacca, though it was he himself who had gathered round him that congregation after 15 years of untiring labour and self-sacrifice. We aimed at thoroughness like the fish-killer "*matsyaghativa*," even to the extent of assailing Keshub's good name both here and in England, not to speak of those filthy tracts in which they assailed the reputation of his friends and relations. Nothing in the field of religion, nothing in the history of church-government, could furnish us with a model for what such a power-grabbing Somaj should be; so that our leaders Messrs. Bose and Shastri,—Mr Bose more than Mr. Shastri—*had to turn to a political body for a model for it*, political body not in a free country but in a subject country which, it has been said, can have no true politics

Politics was Mr Bose's *forte* In his political field of the Indian Association he had shoals of young unfledged politicians like ourselves most of whom, though amphibious in matters of faith, had received training from him in political campaigning and did him *yeoman's service in his semi-political and pseudo-religious campaign against Keshub Chunder* Indeed Ananda Mohan was the idol of our youth In the political field he had himself received practical training in political campaigning directly under Mr Fawcett, for whom he once addressed his English constituency Like Jupiter who "was delivered of Pallas armed, out of his head," Mr Bose was delivered of a hybrid constitution half-political, half-ecclesiastical, which has ruled the Sadharan Somaj from its birth in 1878 to this day. Though he took the British Constitution for his model, he so modified it that it was completely shorn of its democratic character, to suit his purposes, moulding the Executive Committee of the Somaj, somewhat after the fashion of the *British Cabinet*, which practically governs England, and is known in England, as the Government. But

the British Cabinet is a nominated body, and presupposes a King, and a Prime Minister on the one hand, and a controlling House of Commons on the other, which directly controls it in everything Who was to be the King who should appoint the Cabinet? Who was to be the Prime Minister to select and nominate his Cabinet? Let the reader find that out I shall barely ask him to remember that the British Cabinet is not a body elected by the Parliament, but selected by the Prime Minister, and appointed by the King The General Committee of the Sadharan Somaj may be supposed to represent the House of Commons, though only a most emasculated show of one, for our General Committee is to meet only once in three months, it is to take no initiative but *merely* "*observe and discuss*" *and not really control* (Rule 27) the work of the Executive Committee It is not a House of Representatives at all, like the House of Commons, for, unlike the House of Commons, under Rule 22, the General Committee can itself appoint 5 members *representing nobody*, to its own body. Not only that, but under Rule 25, the General Committee can suspend undesirable members of its own body Under Rule 28, (Appendix A, of the Rules passed on September 19th, 1878) it is laid down, "If for some reason or other any member of the General Committee, elected at the Annual Meeting be deemed unfit to continue a member of that Committee then the said Committee may, if necessary, suspend him." Who but his electors can judge of the fitness of their representative? All this practically means that, very unlike the House of Commons, the minority of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj General Committee are entirely at the mercy of the majority, which for reasons already given, would take good care to see, so long as they could, that it consisted of Messrs Bose and Shastri, and their supporters.

The reader will now have no difficulty in realising

why no self-respecting Brahmo would knowingly offer himself to be a member of such a General Committee. I shall never forget the flutter and the commotion that was caused in the General Committee, of which I happened to be a member for 1886, when I raised a question, on which the healthy growth of the Sadharan Somaj mainly depended, but which was not at all agreeable to that *apka waste* majority Again and again did Mr Bradlaugh, on entering Parliament, refuse to take the oath, kissing the Bible again and again the Parliament asked his constituency for a re-election, again and again his constituency re-elected and returned him, until the House was compelled to admit him The House of Commons could not make such short work with the representatives of the people, or arrogate to itself the power of appointing or suspending the representatives of the people as the General Committee could, with regard to the representatives of the Brahmo community, by suspending them and provisionally filling up such vacancies," caused by their suspension, (Old Rule 28), or by making additions to their number (New Rule 22), by themselves appointing as many as five representative men, members of the General Committee The General Committee that can thus make and unmake a large number of the representatives of the community, is it, I ask, like the House of Commons? Is it democratic? Again neither the outgoing British Cabinet, nor the outgoing House of Commons can recommend candidates for election by the constituencies, for the forthcoming House of Commons, as the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Somaj is authorised to do, under Rule 3 of the Subsidiary Rules to submit the names of a suitable number of members of the Sadharan Somaj for election to the forthcoming General Meeting Indeed in democratic countries the constituencies are always free to elect whom they please, and are not bound to limit their choice within the four walls of a list

prepared or recommended by the outgoing cabinet, or House. Said the President of the American Unitarian Association "It is obvious that the members of the Association can vote for anybody they please I do not think that speeches in favour of the nomination of one or another, should be permitted, that is tant-amount to nomination from the floor," (Eighty-Seventh Anniversary—1912) Good reader, our Sadharan Somaj has been guilty of "nomination from the floor," from its very birth, has been guilty of countenancing a sort of see-saw movement for their mutual benefit between the outgoing Executive Committee, and the incoming General Committee, to the exclusion of their more honest, self-respecting, and independent members of the Somaj Yet they would call it democratic. In this respect it must be said to the credit of the New Dispensation Church, that this Church of the latter days, is much more democratic, for, unlike the Sadharan Somaj, their election takes place openly at a public meeting, and though they submit a list, they do so, with a clause that any names not entered in the list may be selected, while in the Sadharan Somaj, the election of the representatives not only does not actually take place in a public meeting, but also the election must be confined within their recommended list. The Rules of the Sadharan Somaj allow no freedom to the electors to select outside the list prepared and sent to them by the outgoing Executive Committee. Thus the reader will see that all "the 40 members elected at the Annual General Meeting" who constitute the "General Committee" (under Rule 20), are not properly speaking representative of the members of the Somaj Nor has the General Committee of the Sadharan Somaj any power of direct control in any matter such as the House of Commons always has. Only think of the present position of Lord Hardinge, in connection with the Mesopotamia affair, and you will realise how tightly

the House of Commons holds the reins of the British Cabinet. On the contrary, these forty so-called representatives of ours again elect "twelve members, from among themselves," by a process of the double distillation of representatives, amounting practically to a "destructive distillation" of the representative principle itself, to form the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Somaj (Rule 30) which really and directly controls the Somaj Again (under Rule 32) only those members of the General Committee who reside in the town or its suburbs, are eligible for the Executive Committee, which means that the freedom of choice of representatives of the rural and district Somajes is not merely restricted, but altogether taken away, by compelling them to elect men like Messrs. Bose and Shastri, and their influential supporters

The Executive Committee thus formed, not only takes the place of the British Cabinet, but also pretends to be elected, which the British Cabinet is not, so that it may usurp the functions of a House of Representatives. It is elected by the General Committee by double distillation, as it were, that it may serve a double purpose, as if 'contrived a double debt to pay, a bed by night and a chest of drawers by day." Firstly, it is purely Executive, like the British Cabinet, but unlike the Cabinet it is not directly controlled by its House of Commons,—the General Committee of the Somaj; secondly, it poses to be a representative body, though only the representative of the representatives of the members of the community, which the British Cabinet is not The representative of the so-called representatives is but a pure sham. Again, the members of the Somaj at their General Meeting can remove the office-bearers, or the members of the General Committee, but it is not said that they can remove from office or have the slightest control over any member of the Executive Committee (Rule 10). Is not then the member-

ship of the Executive Committee a veritable *taluk* (permanent tenure)! Again, *the members of the Somaj cannot raise, at the General Meeting, any disputed question*, (Rule 11), so that properly speaking all our boasted freedom in the Sadharan Somaj is a sham Nothing like the Impeachment of Warren Hastings which took place in the House of Commons, can take place in the General Committee or even at the bar of the General Meeting of the Sadharan Somaj. On the other hand, in this way, the reader sees, the members of the Sadharan Somaj are placed bound hand and foot at the feet of what they still call *their* Executive Committee, which, in its hybrid composition, combines in itself the functions of both the British Cabinet and the British House of Commons, and perhaps also that of the Sovereign. In reality it stands for none of these

The General Committee of the so-called representatives, as well as the General Meeting of the Sadharan Somaj, the reader sees, are both reduced to mere dummies or buffers, or *Sikhandis* as I have called them, merely to subscribe their names to the decrees really passed by the Executive Committee, though only ostensibly in their names Thus the Executive Committee is the only real power in the Sadharan Somaj, being vested with every authority in regard to everything, whether spiritual, moral, or secular (Rule 34), from the appointment and dismissal of the missionaries and ministers, to the sale or purchase of "Debenture Loans" Thus in the Sadharan Somaj, the Executive Committee, though nominally it is the servant of the General Committee, and of the General Meeting of the members, is really their master. That the Sadharan Somaj is thus ruled by a bureaucracy, as I have called it, is literally true. The reader will have no difficulty in realizing, how it was that a double-edged sword hangs at the gate of the Sadharan Somaj, to smite all who would not "surrender" themselves *miseri cordium* to

Messrs. Bose and Shastri It was power they craved for, as we have shown, on Pundit Shastri's own admission, and they had it. After Mr. Bose was gone, first Mr Shastri, then one of Mr. Bose's salaried dependants of the City College, took his place. Thus as a matter of fact the Sadharan Somaj though, nominally, it is now the proprietor of the City College, really still continues to be, more or less, an institution of the City College, and not, in truth, the City College an institution of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, as it should be As it was, when it originated, the Sadharan Somaj was a sort of monarchy, apparently limited by a show of the formalities of the British Constitution, but really an unlimited monarchy, or perhaps a benevolent despotism, with Mr Bose as the uncrowned King, Pundit Shastri as his Prime Minister, and the City College and School gentlemen forming, what Bacon calls, a "Cabinet Council—a remedy worse than the disease."[1] The constitution of the Sadharan Somaj is thus neither ecclesiastical nor political, "neither fish nor flesh, nor good red herring"

Now let the reader answer whether the constitution of the Sadharan Somaj does not look like an imposture practised upon the Brahmo community, under the equivocal name of "the introduction of the constitutional principle of government in the affairs of the church,"[2] which the honest unsuspecting masses of our brethren of the Somaj thought meant the democratic principle, and many of us burying our eyes in sand, like the ostrich, still contend that the Sadharan Somaj stands for "a democratic constitution" The Sadharan Somaj, it is well-known, was organised by a body of power-grabbing politicians of the Indian Association, and established by the sheer power of canvassing and

[1] Bacon's Essays, p. 84.
[2] Pt. Shastri's H B S., Vol. I, p. 267.

campaigning. They were politicians first, and men of religion after Knowingly or unknowingly they administered such a large dose of the political poison of self-assertion into our constitution of the Sadharan Somaj, that it has well-nigh killed in us the self-effacing spirit of true religion "What recks it them, they are sped." They had the power they longed for, though it has almost cost the Brahmo Somaj its spiritual life, as Pt Shastri himself seemed to realise.[1]

Who were those politicians? If the reader will take the trouble to go over the Annual Reports for a few years, say, from 1878 to 1886, he will find the following names with a slight permutation and combination, forming nearly three-fourths of the members of the all-powerful Executive Committee of the Sadharan Somaj (1) Mr. A. M. Bose. (2) His personal friends, Messrs Bhuban Mohan Das, Durga Mohan Das, Shiva Nath Shastri, Dwarka Nath Ganguli, and his own brother Dr M. M Bose. (3) Mr. Bose's salaried dependants of the City School—Messrs. Kali Shankar Sukul, Krishna Kumar Mitra, Rajani Kanta Niyogi, Surya Kumar Chatterji, Sita Nath Dutt, Tara Kissore Chowdhury, Umesh Chandra Dutt, and Heramba Chandra Maitra with Nagendra Nath Chatterji, formerly a political missionary of the Indian Association. Of these names, the reader will also find, that the following appear in the list of the Committee members of the Indian Association for the year 1884—Dr. M. M. Bose, Messrs. Umesh Chandra Datta, H. C. Maitra, K. Sukul, D. M. Das, B. M. Das, A. M. Bose, and D. N. Ganguly.

[1] This statement of mine has been strangely corroborated by the following extract from Pt Shastri's Diary, dated Sep 5, 1903, and reproduced in Mrs Sarkar's "*Pundit Shivanath Shastri's Jeevan Charita*," pp 272–4 —"অনুভব করিতেছি, সমাজকে যে wrong track এ দিয়াছি তাহা হইতে বাহির করিবার জন্য ইহার নিয়মতন্ত্র প্রণালী বদলান উচিত।" "To take the Somaj out of the wrong track into which I have led it, I feel its constitutional system should be altered"

These then are the names common between the Executive Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj, on the one hand, and the Managing Committee of the Indian Association on the other. Thus the reader will have no difficulty in realising the fatal predominance of the political element in the Sadharan Somaj, from its very inception The Ptolemic astronomers began with erroneously assuming the earth to be a fixed centre, and the founders of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj began with one engrossing, erroneous idea, that of numerically overpowering Keshub by taking, in the Somaj, shoals after shoals of their political sympathisers whatever their faith may have been. To rectify this fundamental error, they fell into an ever-lengthening chain of errors, having to introduce irregular *proviso* after *proviso* for party purposes, for excluding their amphibious partners, lest they should, some day, pay our leaders in their own coin The network of a complicated semi-political constitution thus became a necessity, from the meshes of which our Sadharan Somaj must be extricated, if it is to live spiritually. We must revert to the simple rule of the days of the Maharshi, and of Brahmananda Keshub Chunder, of "the direction of the affairs of the Church resting in the hands of the congregation," and follow, what is very similar, the simple methods of Church-government of our Unitarian brethren overseas!

CHAPTER VI

BEHOLD THE MAN

Keshub as Sheep before Shearers

The hour of trial brings out the inner man as nothing else does. And what trial is like the trial of the lover of souls when the souls whom he loves return hatred for love? That Keshub began life with reliance on the grace of God, and, in every trial, took counsel not with flesh and blood but with the Divine Friend, the Inward Monitor, drawing on the infinite resources of His grace, was never more so apparent as in the moment when, like "a sheep before the shearers," he faced the congregation of brothers and sisters whom his love had created, on his return to Calcutta, after the ceremony at Cooch Behar. And the words wrung out of his heart in that hour show the depth of his trust in God and man, and the beauty of his love for both, and may be read, with *the prayer* which follows, as a fitting sequel to the foregoing chapters.

The Grace of God in the Hour of Trial

(Translated)

We have not to go far out to find a subject for the sermon to-day. The living presence of God fills this Temple like the lustre of a million suns. One has not to wait for a *kirtan* to-day,—to work up a mood of devotion, the mere utterance of the Adorable Supreme Being's name makes the very hairs of the body stand

on end. He hath so filled this house by His Fiery Presence!

They that have become our adversaries have unwittingly done us supreme service. And for it we touch their feet and give them thanks. Adversaries, the service of very great friends have ye rendered to us! It is on account of you that the *Jagaddhatri*—the Divine Mother of the Universe reveals Her unspeakable beauty to humanity in such astonishing manner. It is because of you that we can fully realise how near unto us does the Lord of the Universe draw in times of trouble, how tender is the heart of *Hari*,—passionately fond of His devotees, how much love He can manifest unto us! The more the adversaries harass, the more readily does the Mother Divine extend the protection of Her tender arms The more the heart of the devotee is wounded by the onslaughts of the assailants, the more does the Divine Mother soothe him. Behold, of grief and agony, of sorrow and troubles, no trace remains to-day This Brahma Mandir to-day is filled to overflowing with the Presence of God! He alone reigns to-day in our bosom, in our heart of hearts!

We will love more and more, with our heart, the sweet all-pervading Presence of *Hari* of ineffable beauty, and proclaim His glory with greater vigour. My comrades need now have no fear of leaving this world before their time The fire that the adversaries have kindled to-day has given them a longer lease of life. This is the blessing that has been poured to-day upon the heads of my comrades. May you live long, and, carrying the message of this holy faith to a suffering world, convert it into a heaven of bliss. If it is honour you have lost, God shall give you a fuller measure of it. If you are afflicted with sorrow, God has promised to make you happy with a happiness that knows no end. If you are broken-hearted you shall, like heroes, enter the scene of your labours with

redoubled enthusiasm. If you are beset with sins you shall be cleansed in the fire of repentance, and be turned into saints. If the fire of tribulations blazes forth all about you, rest assured God will glorify your Brahmo faith. What can the enemies do with their enmity? The enmity of the world proves to be true friendship. There is no friend here like an enemy. A little abuse patiently borne becomes transformed into a blessing and does infinite good to humanity.

Behold, my God and your God, the God of this Pulpit, and the God of this Temple, *is here* like a *Blazing Fire*. right and left, behind and before. The body thrills today because the Heavenly Presence encompasses us. What need have I any more to wander about? Here and now is our own God with us like a thing in the palm of the hand! What will the adversaries do by lighting a conflagration? We shall be safe in the arms of God. What does it matter if our brethren say harsh words to us? If they, not knowing what they do, vilify us, why should we worry about it or take it to heart? Can they by persecuting us grieve our hearts? Why, *their harsh words have left no trace there!* Can we afford to lose the peace of our souls on account of their persecutions? The more we are made to weep, the deeper will be our peace We would not barter this peace for all the honours and riches of this world. This peace we shall have to maintain under all circumstances. The only loss we cannot afford to sustain is the loss of this peace. And knowing the Mother Divine as the Source of all this love and peace we shall always cherish Her in our hearts with tender care and solicitude.

Let not your spirits be ever soured. Do not be upset if brothers or friends insinuate such sourness to you. Be always on your guard lest your heart be darkened Never cast angry looks on any one. Heaven's nectar is poured upon him who patiently endureth all things. Always have compassion for the enemies who know not

what they are doing. For by their hostilities they advance you in the path of holiness and sanctity. It has been given us to know that God has a hand in the organization of opposition Prosperity and adversity—accept both in an uniform spirit Life has its ups and downs, and to be long-lived one must pass through the furnace of trials. Such is the dispensation of Providence, and none can set it aside. His ways are becoming clear and clearer to-day Behold what priceless treasures lie hid in the heart of hostilities; what unspeakable peace and happiness there is in the midst of persecutions! Hostilities and persecutions come but for a moment; and God reveals Himself in the same. In the midst of opposition and persecution he who cannot stand up and declare with courage that the vision of God shines with greater splendour than ever before, can never be called a man of true faith, for persecution increases faith Compared with the vision of God vouchsafed us now, filling with His consuming presence east, west, north and south, how feeble seems our former vision! See what a soft bed of flowers prepared for us in the midst of a conflagration, and how cool we feel within! The more you are exposed to the attacks of the enemy, the greater will be your privilege of seeing God bringing you peace. When in the battle-field the enemies raise the battle cry, then retire within and enter into deep communion with God, and there flowers will bloom and greens and creepers in profusion will appear in the charms of heaven. Then only will you realise the glory of the Supreme Spirit. How severely have God's beloved been tried in all ages, and how the world has subjected them to crosses and yet have they always sung with joy the glory of God! Put ye on, therefore, the armour of their example. They, whose refuge is God, will not fear, for He never forsakes them. When I have clasped to my bosom the

feet of the Lord, no power on earth can wrench them from me He who clings to the feet of the Lord has found there his abode of bliss, and no one taketh away his joy Who is there among the sons of men to cause sorrow to the seeker of God? When ye are among these chosen of God be not cast down, but as loyal devotees, always cleave to the feet of the Lord. No trials can cause you sorrow Yourself and no one else can be the cause of your own sorrow. As soon as you said, "every one has insulted us, every one has deserted us," the Supreme Being broke into smiles and revealed His gracious countenance Enough, no more complaining! Who made us smile to-day? Who discomfited so easily them that trouble us? Has any one been able to put us to grief?

The treasures that have come into our possession in this hour of trial, we will preserve with care in our hearts and spend our days in joy, so that we may be beyond the reach of our persecutors. There will be cause for grief only when we sin. The curses of men will not touch our hearts. The poisoned shafts hurled at us will enter our hearts as drops of ambrosia. Be calm under all persecution and secretly laugh at all attempts at humiliating you. If yet afflictions visit you, your faith will increase tenfold and your peace a hundredfold Have no manner of doubt about this No evil can befall the Brahmo Somaj Stand fast in faith, repeat God's name, keep up the spiritual exercises Then *sorrow will not cause you sorrow, neither trials bring on* grief. They that are now of little faith will have their faith perfected, those who are hastening to the burning *ghat* to die, you will find them starting into new life and vigour Zeal in devotions converts despair into hope, helplessness into resourcefulness, and the penniless finds abundance of wealth Deep communion in the hour of trial becomes deeper and deeper still. The more people

hiss and hoot at you, the more will you be driven into the recesses of your souls The bitterer the words that reach your ears the sweeter shall become the words of the Divine Indweller The darker seems the world around you, the brighter will be the Kingdom of God within. Rising above the threats and intimidations of the world, take your place in that Kingdom and rest secure there. And there you will find righteousness in the midst of unrighteousness, good in evil, blessings in calamities. All evil shall vanish Friends, lose yourselves in God, let your love of Him grow deeper, and joy and peace will be yours, verily yours!

MY REVENGE

A Prayer

(Translated)

"O Thou Abode of Love and Peace!" in the Navavidhan that which was not is there now. Mankind has entered into a new world of joy. Not only new spiritual disciplines but new peace and happiness have come, and which, by Thy grace, we are enjoying to our hearts' content In the midst of so much physical pain and mental agony the floodgates of an unspeakable inner joy have opened up It seems as if my mind and body have ceased to be, and I exist only as a spirit. I am conscious of myself as abiding in joy and not in sorrow, as abounding in spiritual wealth and not lacking therein.

But there is one terrible, heart-breaking pain which I cannot drive away. O Father, incline Thine ear and hear,—no one gives heed to this gospel of happiness. People do not believe that a new joy, a new happiness has come down from heaven to earth. Why, because I

have not been able to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and show such spiritual tricks. I am shouting at the top of my voice—"O what peace and happiness!" but no one listens. People say—"Where is your God? He cannot be *seen*, how can we enter into communion with Him?" O Lord, I cannot command the trust of the educated community Mere sermons, lectures and books, of which there is more than enough, will not do None cares for these. Example is needed. No one can save the world by mere precepts. These all vanish into thin air.

Poor humanity! that another does enjoy heavenly bliss is neither comprehended nor believed. Not only have they turned a deaf ear to these tidings of great joy, but have stayed away from Thee and from that "centre of paradise" (*Navabrindaban*) which Thou hast built up on this earth. The few tenants who had come to settle there have gone away, the few families whom I prevailed upon to take up their quarters near Thy tabernacle have moved elsewhere. They say that the soil is hard, that seeds sown there do not sprout easily. They run away with such excuses, and not without giving me a bit of their mind. Some wish me to be humiliated, others to be broken down in health and mind, while some would fain see this New Faith swept away from the earth, so that they may not have to call upon Thee. Lord, the world would be relieved if I with Thyself made good our exit. The day brings its load of insults, the night adds to it. How can a heart of flesh stand all these cruel persecutions? And yet the persecutors are not appeased. The delivery of a new message brings its sure reward,—the life-blood of the messenger! No one, not even my own people believe the message. They say that I have not yet attained the *summum bonum*. Lies, calumny, vilification these have been heaped upon my head The ordeal by fire continues all through the twenty-four hours. I eat fire,

I am clothed in fire, I breathe fire, and may have to die by fire And yet, Lord, have I ever complained or wept ? My strength is as the strength of the lion ; not all the vilification of the multitude can do me any harm I have never offered the coward's prayer to be saved from all these attacks. Let trials come ; if I am made to suffer a million times more I will not fear. Let people say what they like. My business is to hawk about from door to door, and beg for more faith, more love. But no customer is to be found. Instead thereof they pelt me with stones, take me to their own places and beat me with shoes. They charge me with seeking notoriety.

Mother, hear my heart's prayer. This is the *revenge* I seek, for which I have waited twenty-five years. Grant me the boon that the message Thou hast vouchsafed to me may find entrance into every heart. This is to be my vengeance before I die,—that throwing my adversaries on their backs I may force down their throats the heavenly happiness of the New Dispensation. O God, make me live for ever ! What I want is that all may call Thee ' Mother " Insults and abuses are like the rice and curry of my daily food They are but the price of my labours in the field of *yoga* ; to the lover of God they are as the crown of glory. Being God if Thou canst stand so much from mortals, cannot Thy chosen servants follow Thy example ? I will endure all. Why shall I leave my adversary to himself ? I shall take him to my home. In return for all his kicks, I will give him to drink of the nectar of heaven. The divine glory of the *Navavidhan* he must *see*, the message from Thee that I have delivered must be *accepted*. And this is the message,—*the unseen can be seen, loved and adored ; the centre of paradise—the Navabrindaban—created here is real, tremendously real, where all may dance together in joy*. The greater their hatred, may deeper be their absorption in Thee ; and may they call Thee " Mother "

and dance, so that their life of misery may end. Once brought to Thy feet my prayers will be fulfilled. And that will be punishment indeed! Then, if they will, let them strike me!

To the world which decried *bhakti* as unreason, and could not tolerate the Mother's name, I may turn round and say—"Why art thou struck dumb now? Canst thou fight against the Mother Divine? Has not Her name vanquished thee? Seest thou not what one, so weak as myself, when helped by God (*Hari*), can do?" This is our message—that we have found the One Mother, and dance in joy in the new heaven on earth (*Brindaban*). The New Gospel which Thou hast sent from heaven, may all listen to and believe. It is a blessed moment which may no one heedlessly pass by. May all those who have vilified us be filled with the nectar of heaven!

INDEX

A

Acharya (Minister, Keshub Chunder), p. 14: *Pradhan Acharya* (Minister-in-Chief, Devendranath Tagore), p. 19

Adam, Rev .. p 31, 198, 204, 209

Adesh .. (Command), p. 86, 88, 94, 95, 108 109, 118, 147, 175, 178, 179, 215,

Adhikari Vichara (Considerations of competency), p. 44

Adhyasa .. (Ascription), p. 185

Adi Somaj .. (The Brahmo Somaj of Devendranath, also called Calcutta Somaj), p 15, 19, 47, 82, 120, 131, 190, 229, 250

Albigenses p. 187

Algebra, religious .. p. 185

America . .. p 16, 80

American Unitarian Association p. 248, 250, 260

Amulet p 115

Anglican Church .. p 159

Anglicize p 22, 168, 188, 196, 197, 211, 212, 213

Anusthanic (Out and out), p. 9, 60: Non-*anusthanic*, p. 66, 254

Apostolic Body .. The Apostles of the New Dispensation, p 48, 76

Arabia p. 186

Armstrong, Mr. .. p. 246

Arnot, S p 201

Arya Somaj p. 251

Athanasian p 52

Athenæum p 211

Atmajibani (Autobiography), p. 8, 9, 12, 87

Atmiya Sabha.. .. (Religious Association), p. 30, 66, 81

Auliya (Master or *Karta*, hence *Karta-bhaja*), p. 84, 85, 237, 238, 239

Avataravada (Doctrine of Incarnation), p. 80

B

Bacon, Roger..	p. 263
Bain, Alexander	p. 120, 130
Banerji, Kali Ch.	p. 154
Banerji, Sasipada	p 68, 69, 93
Baptism ..	p 120, 128, 184: Baptist, p 15, 185
Baroda ..	p. 141
BEHOLD THE MAN	p 3
Bengal ..	p. 5, 106: East Bengal, p 58, 257
Benthamite ..	p. 76, 79, 112, 242
Bhagavat Gita..	p. 99
Bhakti ..	(Exuberant love of God), p. 223, 224
Bharat Asram..	(Home for Spiritual Culture), p, 84, 91, 107
Bible ..	p 16
Bifurcation ..	p. 31, 37ff.
Blasphemy ..	p. 97
Bose, Ananda Mohan	p. 54, 66, 71, 76, 83, 84, 90–92, 95, 118, 181, 212–214, 221–225, 234, 235, 238, 240, 244, 251–254, 256, 257, 258, 261, 263
Bose, Rajnarain	p 63, 91
Bradlaugh, Mr.	p 259
Brahma ..	(God), p 9: ParaBrahma (Supreme Spirit), p. 9.
Brahma Mandir	(A public place of worship for the Brahmo Somaj people) appropriation of, p 256
Brahmananda..	(One who rejoices in God), title given by Devendranath Tagore to Keshub, p. 14
Brahma Sabha	(Meeting for monotheistic worship), p 7, 8, 10, 12
Brahmavidyalaya	(School of Theology), p. 14
Brahmin ..	p. 9: Non–, p. 8
Brahmo Dharma	(Brahmo Religion), p 9, 12
Brahmo Dharma Vyam	A book by Devendranath, p. 12, 82
Brahmoism ..	(Brahmo religion), p 47, 94, 219, 220, 229, 233, 251, 255
Brahmo Marriage Bill	p. 120
Brahmo Niketan	(Brahmo Students' Home), p. 74, 96, 255

Brahmo Public Opinion	(The Organ of the Protestors), p. 65, 86, 93, 94, 96, 98, 100, 110, 113, 118, 120, 144, 146, 147, 177, 179
Brahmo School	p 16
Brahmo Somaj	p. 1, 3, 13, 15, 55, 87, 161, 162, 168, 172, 173, 175, 180, 196, 206, 207, 209, 210, 212, 215, 221, 250, 251
Brahmo Somaj of India ..	p. 20, 250, 251
Brahmo Year Book ..	(Miss Collet's compilation), p. 5
Bristol	p 5, 6, 210
British and Foreign Unitarian Association ..	p. 201, 204, 246, 250, 253, 256
British Cabinet ..	p. 258, 259, 261, 262
British Constitution ..	p 257
Brotherhood .. .	p 4, 10, 61, 78, 131
Buddha	p 80, 140
Buddhism	p. 5, 85, 97, 187
Bureaucratic	p. 41, 43, 262

Calcutta	p. 14
Called	p 52
Campaigning ..	p 264
Canvassing	p. 71
Carey, William ..	p. 195
Carlyle, Thomas ..	p 24, 28, 60, 89, 124
Carpenter, Miss ..	p. 9, 201–208
Caste	p 5, 13, 15, 115, 116, 119
Catholicity	p. 132
Chaitanya, Sri ..	p. 143, 183, *Vide* Gauranga
Chakravarti, Ajit K. .	p 21, 61
,, Jadav Ch. ..	p. 108, 234
,, Kailash Ch.	p. 225
,, Navakumar	p. 96
Chanakya	p. 141
Channing, W. E. ..	p 102, 205
Chatterji, Adinath ..	p. 234
,, Bankim Ch. ..	p. 154
,, Nogendra Nath	p. 21, 33, 51, 106, 163, 226, 234, 237, 239–242
Chowdhury, Tarakishore	p. 236, 237
Christian	p. 15, 109, 113, 137, 139, 140, 168, 169, 177, 179, 182, 184, 190, 195

Christianity ..	p. 85, 168, 169, 171, 174, 184, 192, 194, 200, 248
Christianisation	p. 6, 169, 183, 187–189, 214
Christianised ..	p. 102, 193, 196, 212, 213
Christian India	p. 195, 197
Christian Life..	(Organ of the British Unitarians), p. 98
Chunagullee ..	(Eurasian slums), p. 196, 213
Church Government	p. 53, 64
City College .	p 157, 234, 236, 254, 263, 264
Civil Marriage Act	p 108
Cobbe, Miss ..	p 98, 101, 144
Collet, Miss S.D.	p 4–6, 91–101, 104, 105, 109, 110, 113, 117, 120, 131, 144, 146, 159–164, 166, 168–173, 176–180, 182, 184, 186–188, 190, 193, 194, 196, 199–203, 205–207, 209–211, 213–216
Combination ..	p. 93, 215
Comet ..	p. 222
Commissioner	p. 176
Commonwealth	p. 255
Community ..	p. 12
Comte, August	p 151
Congregationals	p 248, 249
Constitution ..	p. 227, 253, 263
Constitutional	p. 27
Constitutionalism	p. 78, 83
Contemporary Review	p. 170, 194
Cooch Behar Agents	p 118
Cooch Behar Marriage	p 66–68, 74, 75, 77, 94, 98, 99, 116, 117, 119, 120, 133, 134, 138, 141, 169, 170, 172, 177, 182, 189, 213, 215, 255, 256
Cooch Behar Raj	p. 66, 96, 113
Council ..	p. 84
Creed ..	p 79
Croft, Sir Alfred	p. 222
Cosmology ..	p. 220

D

Dalton, Mr. ..	p. 108, 140
Das, Durga M.	p. 56–59, 73, 84, 91, 95, 107, 118 125, 221–223

Das, Navadwip Ch .. p. 234, 237, 240–242, 247
,, Parvati Ch. .. p. 56
,, S. R p 56, 57
Dayananda, Swami .. p. 40, 121
De, Rev. Lal B. .. p. 56, 128, 162, 179
Deification p. 92
Deism p 103, 163, 164, 166, 168, 171, 180, 209, 210
Deist p. 216, 225
Delegates p 25
Democracy . .. p. 254
Democratic p. 52, 83, 246, 253, 263
Denationalisation .. p. 5 182, 199
Depressed Classes .. p 17
Dev, Shiv Ch. .. p 78, 110–112, 114, 118, 137, 221, 223
Development p. 26
Devi, Sunity p 113, 114
Dharma p. 24
Dharma Sabha .. p 31
Dharmatattwa .. p. 26
Dwide et Impera .. p. 172, 178, 187, 188
Divine Command .. p. 118, 175, 176, 178
Divine Idea p. 24, 26
Divine Service .. p. 37
Doctrine p. 79, 86
Dogma p. 82
Duff, Dr A. p. 56
Durga (goddess), 112, 115, 233, 238
Dutt, Akshaya K. .. p. 42, 66, 79, 81, 82, 220
,, Prof Dwijadas .. p. 122
,, Kalikadas .. p. 107
,, Kalinath .. p. 237
,, Umesh Ch. .. p. 85, 221, 223, 237, 240–242
Dyson, Rev. p 56

E

Education p. 11
Elders p 237
Ellis, G E. p. 248, 249
Emancipating .. p. 11
Emerson, R W. .. p. 61, 89, 150
Enemies p. 143
England p. 9, 21

Enlightenment	p. 76, 80
Equality ..	p. 52
Estlin, Mr .	p. 204
Eucharist ..	p 128
Eurasian, spiritual	p. 160, 162, 212
European ..	p 57
Europeanisation	p. 206, 214, 224
Evangelist .	p. 10, 11, 13, 14, 18
Evisceration ..	p. 215
Executive Committee	p. 228, 234, 236, 240, 242, 243–247, 252–254, 261, 262, 264, 265
Expediency ..	p 107
Experiment .	p 173, 174
Expose ..	p. 227, 228

F

Famine ..	p. 16
Fatherhood ..	p. 10, 61, 78, 131
Fawcett, Mr ..	p 257
Female Emancipation	p 222
Feminism ..	p 222
First Man ..	p 224
Froude, J A...	p 105
Fulfilment ..	p 34
Future Church	p. 16

G

Galileo ..	p. 79
Gandhi, M K	p. 128
Ganguly, Dwarka N.	p. 264
Gardeners ..	p. 20
Garifa ..	p. 117
Gauranga ..	p. 143: *Vide* Sri Chaitanya
Gautama ..	p. 143
Gayatri ..	p. 8, 11, 12, 77
General Committee	p. 260
Germ ..	p. 33, 36, 104, 157, 166
Germinator ..	p. 19
Ghosh, Dr. Ducowry	p. 225, 243
Ghosh, Lalmohan	p 60
„ Manmohun	p. 95

Gladstone, W E.	p. 173
God-vision ..	p. 13, 81, 219
Goswami, Bijoy K	(Pundit), p. 13, 16, 49, 55, 58, 59, 80, 81, 116, 121, 125, 218, 220–224, 226–228, 231, 233–235, 237–239, 241–245, 247, 249
Grandfather ..	(of the Brahmo Somaj), Rammohun, p 4, 20, 23
Great Men ..	p 24, 60, 87–90, 103, 167
Guilty ..	p. 235
Gupta, Aughorenath	(*Sadhu*), p 54
,, Umanath	p. 54
Guru .	p. 104, 232
Gurumara vidya	(Prophet-killing cult), p. 244
Guskarah ..	p. 14, 88

H

Haldar, Rakhaldas ..	p 13
Half-religious ..	p 255
Hardinge, Lord ..	p. 260
Hare, Miss . ..	p 207
Hari	(Deity as Saviour) 121, 184, 185, 224
Harinama	(God's name), p. 121, 176, 225, 226
Harkara . ..	p. 31
Harmony	p. 12, 166, 168
Harmonious development	p. 164
Harvest Festival Service	p. 130
Hastings, Warren ..	p 262
Hatha yoga	p 122, 236
Headed .. .	p. 221
Hedge, Mr.	p 98
Hegel .. .	p 75
Hero, favourite ..	p 168
Hindu	p. 9: Non-, p. 34
Hinduism	p 185, 207, 211
History of the Brahmo Somaj	(Pt Shastri's), p. 68, 70, 118, 155, 157
Holy Spirit ..	p 1
Homa ..	p. 120–121, 128, 184
House of Commons .	p 258–262
Howard	p. 183
Hybrid	p. 262

Idola .. p. 124
Idolatry .. p. 111, 115, 120–122, 125, 185
Imperialistic .. p. 83
Incarnation .. p. 172, 174, 241
Independence p 248
India .. p 18
Indian Association p 54, 65, 82, 256, 263, 264
Indian Messenger (Organ of the Sadharan Brahmo Somaj), p 84
Indian Mirror.. (Organ of the Brahmo Somaj), p. 16, 29, 148, 175, 213
Indian Nation p 141
Initiation .. p. 62, 90
Inquirer .. (Organ of the British Unitarians), p 93, 95, 102, 213
Inquisition .. p 79
Inspiration .. p. 77–82, 88, 92, 93, 103, 107, 111, 119, 179, 180, 219
International Marriage p 132
Interracial ,, p. 140
Intuition .. p. 220
Intuitionalist.. p 76

J

Jagat Babu .. p 237
Jalaluddin Miah (A Mahomedan Brahmo), p 132
Jay, Rev .. p 196, 200, 205, 206
Jesus Christ .. p 80, 98, 140, 143, 150, 162, 166, 168, 173, 174, 181–187, 191, 207, 208, 210
Jesuitical p. 146, 228
Jurisdiction p. 20

K

Kabir .. p 143
Kadamba .. (A tree), p. 121
Kali .. (goddess), p. 233, 238
Kant .. p. 74, 166, 220
Kar, Banka B. p. 226
Kartabhaja .. p. 72, 85, 121, 138, 221, 235–241, 247

Kenny, Dr. p. 199, 202, 203, 206
Kiddel, Miss p. 205
King-maker p. 91
Krishna, Sri p. 80, 121, 143

L

Lamb, of the Lily Cottage p. 105
Last Will and Testament p. 195, 197
Lawyer p. 222
Leader . .. p. 1, 61, 164, 168, 177, 178, 189, 19
Leeds Conference .. p. 101
Le etat cest moi .. p. 244
Liliputians p. 215
Linden, Canon .. p. 203
Literary Gazette .. p 211
Lloyd, Walter.. .. p. 248–251
London . .. p. 91

M

Maduli (amulet) . p. 115
Maghotsav .. . p. 15
Maharajah, Cooch Behar p. 110, 113, 116, 135, 176
,, Tipperah . p. 117
Maharani .. . p. 176
Mahomed .. p 28, 97, 141
Maitra, Heramba Ch. . p. 247
Majority .. . p. 28, 55, 60, 78, 82, 156, 174, 216
Malthusian . .. p 76
Manning, Miss . p 95, 101
Mantras .. . p. 137, 138
Manu .. . p 17
Mara (Satan) . . p. 140
Marriage Bill .. . p. 120
Marshman, Mr. . p 190, 195
Martin, Montgomery . p 34
Martineau, Dr. . p. 154, 246
Martyrdom .. . p. 118
Masses .. . p. 17, 22
Mayurbhunj .. . p. 141
Members p 243
Militant .. . p. 126
Mill, J. S. p 79, 114, 130
Milton, J. p. 123, 248, 252

Mimansa (philosophy) p. 163
Minister .. p. 14
Missionary Conference p 26
Mitra, Ananda p. 147
„ Krishna K p. 234, 236, 237, 247
Model .. p. 41, 257
Moses .. p. 143, 175, 187
Mother .. p 63, 144, 183, 184
Motto .. p. 15
Mouthpieces .. p 25
Mozoomdar, P. C p 16, 40, 56, 58, 72, 82, 85, 94, 97, 136, 157, 174, 176, 187, 188, 253
Mukherji, Nibaran Ch. p 58
Muller, Max (Prof.) p 98, 99, 101, 122, 154
Munshi, Nobin p 221, 237

N

Nanak, Guru .. p. 143
Nandi, Kailash Ch p 94
National .. p. 22
National Congress p. 235
Nationalism .. p. 131, 199, 209
Nationalising .. p. 102
Natural religion p. 162–168, 171
Nava Samhita p. 156
New Dispensation (*Navavidhan*), p. 7, 10, 78, 86, 97, 103–105, 110, 120, 127, 142, 143, 150, 152, 153, 155, 156, 166, 168, 180, 182, 184, 204, 210, 229, 260
New India .. p. 196, 206
Newman, Cardinal p. 100, 105
Newman Francis p. 129
Normal School p. 16
Nyaya .. p. 163

O

Obnoxious p. 86, 90, 179
Oligarchy p. 243

P

Pangvandha .. (Cripple and the blind), p. 214ff.
Parker, Theodore p. 57, 98, 100, 129

Pataliputra ..	p. 84
Patanjala ..	p. 163
Paul, St ..	p 47, 175, 219
Pauttalikata nirakara	(Formless idolatry), p 125
Phobia ..	p 128
Pilgrimage ..	p. 186: *Vide Tirtha Chatushtaya*
Pillorying ..	p 244
Pioneers ..	p. 64
Plato ..	p. 61, 106
Poison, political	p. 264
Politics .	p. 53, 67, 219, 257
Pope ..	p. 243, 248
Popery ..	p. 151, 156, 244
Positivist	p. 72
Posterity ..	p. 72
Power ..	p. 85, 263
Pradhan Acharya	(Maharshi Devendranath), p. 19
Prakrit ..	p 165
Pranayama ..	p 232, 238, 240
Pratinidhi Sabha	(Representative Assembly), p. 68
Pratt, Dr. ..	p 40, 238
Precepts of Jesus	p 197, 204, 209
Pretensions ..	p. 104
Priestley, Dr ..	p. 102
Pracharak Sabha	(Missionary Conference), p 48
Prodigal Son .	p 2
Prometheus ..	p 107
Prophet .	p. 18
Protestor ..	p 65, 71, 101
Protest Leaders	p. 109, 110, 112–114, 118, 213, 215, 216
Providential ..	p. 139
Ptolemaic ..	p. 265

Q

Quoran, Al	p. 16, 156

R

Radha	p. 121, 230, 233, 238, 242
Raja, of Bijni ..	p. 135
Rama ..	p. 191
Ramakrishna Paramhamsa	p. 130, 154, 231, 233, 239

Rammohun Roy, Raja .. p. 4, 6, 7, 10–12, 61–63, 65, 66, 77, 106, 119, 160, 167, 169, 170, 172-174, 178–180, 184, 189, 190–198, 200, 202, 203, 205, 207-209, 211 214, 245
Rationalist p. 76, 216
Realism . .. p 140
Remarks on Settlement . p. 192, 195, 197, 198, 211
Renouncing p 116
Representative Assembly (*Pratinidhi Sabha*), p. 59, 83, 250, 251, 252, 256
Representative Man .. p. 24
Rights p 218
Ringleaders p 242
Rishi p. 183
Roy, Banga Ch. .. p 94, 95, 157, 188, 256
,, Gour Govinda . (*Upadhyaya*), p 15, 36, 94, 113, 119, 134, 136–138, 176
,, P. K., Dr. .. p 157, 175, 212, 214, 247
Roy Press . .. p 147
,, Prokash Ch .. p. 148
Ruskin, John p 92

S

Sachchidananda . p 229
Sadharan Brahmo Somaj p 2, 83, 85, 86, 97, 115, 121, 127, 131, 132, 159, 168, 169, 183, 190, 213, 218, 221–224, 229, 235, 236, 239, 242, 245, 246, 252, 253, 255, 257, 258, 260, 263, 265
Salary .. p. 49, 64
Samadarshi .. (Anglo-Bengali Protest Journal), p 74, 76, 91, 252
Samalochak .. (Bengali Protest Journal), p. 96
Sangat .. p. 13, 16
Sankhya .. p. 163, 214
Sankirtan .. (Choral singing), p 54, 181
Saraspakshi .. (A pseudonym meaning a crane), p 96, 216
Saraswati .. (Goddess of learning), p. 121
Sawflies .. p 23
Sceptre .. p 100
Schism .. p. 74, 159
Scylla and Charybdis p 73

Secrecy Act ... p. 228
Secretary .. p 78, 107, 116
Secret Society p. 237
Seeley p. 98
Sen, A C p. 148
,, Girish Ch. p. 108
Sen, Keshub Chunder p. 1, 2, 10–13, 58, 70, 72 75–78, 81–83, 85, 90, 93, 95–97, 99, 100, 102–107, 109–112, 116–118, 122, 123, 126, 128, 131, 136, 138, 140, 142, 143, 145, 148, 151, 155, 157, 164, 167–178, 180–183, 185, 187–190, 196, 198, 204, 207, 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 219–222, 224, 228, 236, 242, 244, 247, 250, 251, 256, 257, 265
Sen, Madhusudan p 247
,, Ram Kamal p 117, 118,
Sevakar Nivedan p. 18
Shaktisamchara (Mesmeric passes), p. 237, 238
Shalgram p 117
Shame .. p 216
Shastri, Pt. Shiva Nath p 25, 62, 65, 68–71, 73, 76, 83, 84, 86–91, 99, 101, 107, 112, 114, 115, 118, 121, 127–131, 136, 138, 144, 146, 148, 149, 153–156, 163–167, 173, 177, 180, 181, 183, 189, 221, 222, 224, 225, 234, 235, 237–241, 243, 244, 251, 253, 254, 256–258, 261, 263, 264
Shikhandis .. (Scapegoat), p 262
Shivalingam .. p 130
Simla .. p 88
Sismondi p 198
Sloka Samgraha p. 16
Social Reformer p. 76, 218
Socrates .. p. 106, 183
Soma (Devendranath's son), p. 145
Sower .. p 19
Special Dispensation p. 86–89
Spencer, Herbert p 79
Split p 5, 22
Sri Durbar .. p. 30, 48 (*Vide Apostolic Durbar*)
Sri Shankaracharya p. 8, 17, 41, 73, 100, 122, 123, 209
Statement p. 228, 231, 234, 235, 240
Statesman, The p. 153

Sudras ..	p. 7, 17, 18
Suggestio falsi	p. 97, 188
Suicidal ..	p. 216
Sulava Samachara	p. 16
Suppressio veri	p. 96
Swagger ..	p 219
Sword ..	p. 28
Symbolism ..	p. 122, 124
Synod ..	p 48
Synthesis ..	p. 165, 166

T

Tagore, Devendranath ..	(Maharshi), p 4–10, 12–14, 24, 65, 66, 77, 80, 81, 87, 88, 104, 106, 116, 138, 145, 154, 179, 190, 220, 241, 247, 250, 255, 265
Tagore, Rabindranath ..	p 40, Robi, p 125
Taluk	p 79, 262
Tattwabhushan, Sitanath	(Pundit), p 61, 122, 237, 247
Tattwakaumudi ..	(Protestors' Bengali Journal), p 225
Thakur .. .	(Deity), p 184
Thakur, Dwarka Nath ..	p 32, 51
Theism ..	p 99, 209
Theistic Quarterly Review	p 95
Theosophical Society .	p. 251
Theosophist	p. 241
Third rate	p 219
Thread, sacred ..	p 5, 13, 55, 138
Timocracy	p. 67
Tirtha Chatusthaya .	p 142
Town Hall ..	p 82
Trinitarian . ..	p 92, 178, 249
Trinity ..	p. 191, 198
Triumphant	p. 126
Triumvirate . ..	p 72
Trust Deed . .	p 7, 10, 11, 33
Trustees	p 39
Truth	p. 63
Tucker, Booth ..	(Major), p. 71
Two-fold	p. 217

U

Unanimity	p 48
Unitarian	p. 8, 9, 11, 198

Unitarianism — p. 160: Christian Unitarianism, p. 160, 161: Hindu Unitarianism, p 160, 195
Universal — p. 15, 20, 73, 79, 133
Universalism — p. 36
Upanishads — p. 8, 13

V

Vaishnavism — p 5
Vedantic — p. 8, 11, 163, 203
Verbiage . .. — p. 222
Version .. — p 118
Vicinity — p. 254
Vidhan . .. — (Dispensation), p. 86
Vidyabagish, Ram Ch. .. — p 7, 36, 55
Vidyaratna, Ram K .. — p 226
Vidyasagar, Ishwar Ch. . — p. 57
Vikriti .. . — p. 165
Vilification — p. 144
Voice — p. 14
Voice from the Himalayas — p. 18
Votes — p. 28
Voysey, Rev. C. .. — p 98, 99, 100, 101

W

War .. — p. 103
Warner, Mr . — p 196, 200, 205
Widow marriage — p 4, 10
Wilson, H. H . — p. 77, 201
Wolverhampton — p 216, 249, 255
Womankind .. — p. 17
Woodford, Mrs — p. 197
Word-fencing — p. 218
Worship .. — p. 7, 35: Worshipper, p. 253

Z

Zend Avesta .. — p 16

Published by Prof. Dwijadas Datta, Kandhirparh, Comilla, and Printed by P. Knight, 41, Lower Circular Road, Calcutta